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Jordan demands action in Bosnia

JAKARTA (Petra) — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Taha Haman Al Hassan Wednesday called for a ceasefire in Bosnia-Herzegovina saying war crimes committed by Serbs and the siege of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo were getting worse. In an address at the consultative ministerial council of the non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the Indonesian capital, Mr. Hassan said Jordan was among the first countries to send peacekeeping troops to former Yugoslavia and that it now has the second largest contingent after France. Jordan condemns the Serb crimes and is amazed at the silence of the international community on these crimes, he said. He said since the Kingdom believed in dialogue as a means to resolve problems, it calls for an immediate ceasefire and urges the start of talks between warring parties. The Kingdom, Mr. Hassan said, also calls for ending the arms embargo imposed on Bosnia-Herzegovina so that a balance is achieved between the warring factions.

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Plots to destabilise Jordan uncovered, Hammad reports

Group(s) planned assassinations, bombings and attacks on security forces, minister tells House

By Ayman Al Safadi

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Security forces have uncovered plots to destabilise Jordan through assassinations, bombings and attacks on security personnel and have made several arrests, Interior Minister Salameh Hammad announced Wednesday.

The group(s) planned to assassinate Jordanian "intellectuals" and bomb public places including Parliament, nightclubs, supermarkets, movie theatres and video rental shops, Mr. Hammad said. Mr. Hammad told the Lower House of Parliament that the arrested groups also planned to detonate two bombs in Irbid and two others in Salt. He said the group(s) planned to rob banks and attack police and intelligence officers in order to steal their weapons. But he said a report that a bomb was planted in the Hashemiyeh area in downtown Amman turned out to be false and no explosives were found when the security forces searched the area Wednesday. He said another report claimed that a bomb was planted in the Naser movie theatre in Zarqa. Mr. Hammad told deputies that four supermarkets were recently robbed and explosives were found in Zahran cinema in downtown Amman. Mr. Hammad told the Lower House that the arrested groups planned to bomb Par-



Salameh Hammad

Bomb scare sparks downtown commotion

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Reports that a bomb was discovered in the bustling Hashemiyeh Square in downtown Amman in the early hours of Wednesday when people converge in the area on their way to work caused widespread traffic jams in the city centre, raised eyebrows of citizens throughout the capital but eventually passed as one more of those hoaxes experienced in many cities around the world.

A two-to-three-square-kilometre area around the square was sealed off completely and vehicles were diverted to alternate routes while sappers combed the area as every branch of the security agencies sprang into action. Residents in the area were asked to remain indoors and lock their doors and windows. Reporters who rushed to the scene were not allowed to approach the area — "for their own protection," as one police officer put it.

Several journalists were bundled into police cars and dropped at the central bus terminal at Abdali with a warning not to return to downtown until after the police operation was completed.

Some of the journalists reported seeing more than a dozen people being led away. But it was not immediately clear whether they were arrested on suspicion of being involved or removed after resisting police orders to leave the area.

Interior Minister Salameh Hammad told Parliament later in the day that no bomb was discovered after a thorough search of the area. It remained unclear what triggered the alarm. Mr. Hammad spoke of "a warning that a bomb was placed in the Hashemiyeh Square." Other sources said the alarm was raised by municipal workers on their early morning round of the square, which houses the main terminal for service taxis for passengers to and from the northeast.

Another unconfirmed report said an anonymous caller had telephoned a warning to a storekeeper in the area, one of the most crowded areas in downtown Amman during commuter hours.

Police officials were not available for comment. Coming as it did in the wake of two explosions at movie

Parliament urges government to take firm action against terrorism

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Monday condemned "terrorist acts committed against Jordan" and declared its full and absolute support for all measures taken by the government to protect the Kingdom's security.

In a statement issued Wednesday, the House called on the government to severely punish those committing such acts.

After being briefed by Interior Minister Salameh Hammad on a series of terrorist acts targeting several Jordanian personalities, including security personnel, the House expressed pride in the Jordanian security personnel "who are defending the security, tranquility and safety of this country and its people, and who managed to reveal the identity of those plotting and executing these terrorist acts."

The House, said the statement, "urges the members of the one Jordanian family, government and people and security apparatus, to unify their ranks in the face of these terrorist plots which target this country, its fortitude, progress and democratisation process."

"This Lower House affirms to all that this steadfast country will always, God willing, adhere to its principled stands and will always defend the

causes of the Arab and Islamic nations, particularly the cause of Holy Jerusalem," the statement said.

It added: "(Jordan) will always be under the Hashemite leadership and oasis of security and stability and a place of Arab solidarity, agreement and reconciliation, and will not be dissuaded from its principled stands on Arab and Islamic issues any terrorist acts."

Arafat and Peres sign agreement

CAIRO (AP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Wednesday initiated an agreement on security issues that have blocked implementation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)-Israel peace accord.

At a ceremony hosted by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the two signed a 21-page document plus maps, much of it put together in three days of marathon talks here. The document, Mr. Mubarak said, eliminates "several obstacles and paves the way" for an overall agreement to be negotiated later between Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Israel and the PLO have been haggling over security issues that have held up Israel's withdrawal since the Dec. 13 date set in the peace accord signed in Washington three months earlier.

The withdrawal will clear the way for limited self-rule for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Mr. Peres said that among the issues still to be decided between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Rabin was the size of the Jericho area to be ceded to Palestinian control.

After the signing, Mr. Arafat told reporters: "We consider what we have done in the past three days a major step for the implementation of the agreement, which we have signed in Washington" in

September.

In turn, Mr. Peres said: "I know that Chairman Arafat had today some very difficult decisions, and so did Israel." He said his talks with Mr. Arafat had settled "five or six of the most complicated issues" but added: "We didn't complete our work."

Mr. Arafat said the new pact was "a very important step to implement the agreement from paper to the ground."

He added: "We can say that Palestine — and the name of Palestine — has returned to the map of the Middle East."

As Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat were speaking, President Clinton announced in Washington that the agreement had been reached.

"Another big milestone has been achieved today," Mr. Clinton told members of the World Jewish Congress.

The signing ceremony here was delayed for several hours by last-minute disputes that kept Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa closed for several hours with Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat.

Israel Radio said that at one point, an infuriated Mr. Peres stormed out of the meeting, slamming the door behind him.

Egyptian sources said that among the problems was border crossing points and that there was still disagreement about who actually would stand at the border.

(Continued on page 10)

Sanaa government frees south-bound cargo plane

SANAA (Agencies) — An Ugandan-flagged Boeing 707 seized in northern Yemen because it allegedly was carrying an unlicensed cargo of light military gear destined for southern Yemen was allowed to leave Wednesday, aviation officials said.

The officials, who spoke on condition they not be named, said the plane was headed to Kampala, Uganda, via Asmara, Ethiopia. It had been seized by Sanaa authorities Sunday.

The officials did not know what happened to the cargo, said to include telecommunications equipment, but they assume it remained in the hands of the northerners.

Yemen's defence minister said on Tuesday the plane seized in North Yemen was carrying equipment for use by southern army units.

"(The plane) was carrying batteries for communications sets used by military units in the southern and eastern provinces," Haitham Qassem Taher said in a statement issued in Aden.

"The southern and eastern provinces" is a term used to describe former South Yemen, which merged with the north to form a unified state in 1990.

A political quarrel between the former ruling parties of north and south, now ostensibly partners in Yemen's government, raised fears unity might be in danger. The two have signed an agreement to

end their differences by Thursday.

The Boeing 707 had been held in the northern airport of Hodieda since Sunday after being seized in what southern officials and the plane's British owners Ana Aviation said was "an act of air piracy."

Officials at Aden airport said the plane was on a legitimate flight to the south, but the north said it had entered Yemeni airspace illegally and was carrying communications equipment for military use.

Diplomats in Sanaa said the plane's seizure added to the complexity of the quarrel between the southern Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) and the northern General Peoples Congress (GPC) that has held the country by the throat since July.

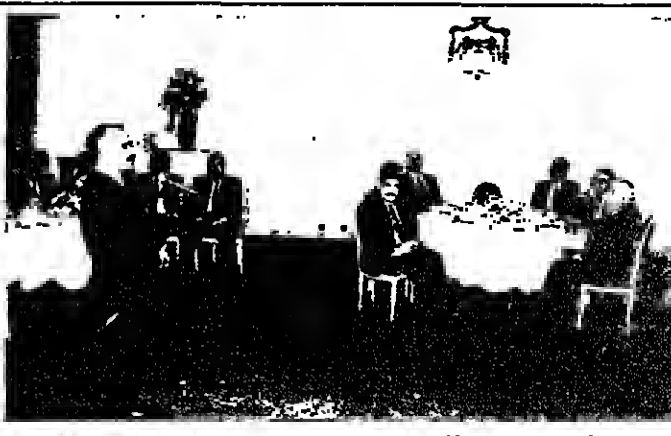
They said the incident showed divisions between the armed forces of the two former Yemens, still far from integrated despite the merger, were becoming more marked.

Mr. Taher is a YSP member, and like other southern ministers, has remained in the former southern capital of Aden during the YSP's feud with President Ali Abdullah Saleh's GPC.

Southern troops are effectively under the control of Mr. Taher and the YSP, while northern troops follow the orders of the GPC, the diplomats said.

Mr. Taher's statement said

(Continued on page 10)



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday addresses heads of various government departments and agencies (Petra)

Crown Prince: Ramadan is a month of work

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Wednesday that the Jordanian leadership is keen on developing the administrative system in the country to cope with the requirements of the peace process.

Addressing a meeting with the secretaries-general of ministries and directors of departments at the Royal Court, the Crown Prince said utmost coordination was needed among the various departments to achieve that goal.

He said that the country should be ready for the outcome of the peace process as it was ready to confront the consequences of the war and the Israeli aggression in 1967.

Noting that the meeting was held with the heads of departments just before the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan, Prince Hassan said that during the coming month the departments should intensify their efforts and work harder.

The Crown Prince called attention to the need for close cooperation among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government to reflect the country's commitment to democracy and democratic rule in word and practice.

"It would not be possible for this country, which has achieved progress in many fields, to attain success in the coming stage unless it has achieved progress in developing its administrative system," he added.

He reiterated His Majesty King Hussein's directives for the government to reward dedicated employees in a bid to promote effective public administration.

The Crown Prince urged Cabinet members to organise weekly meetings with the heads of their departments and secretaries-general to work together and to come up with solutions to their urgent issues.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, who was present at the meeting delivered a brief speech, reiterating the government's decision to support the creative elements in public administration.

He stressed that the secretaries-general and directors of departments shoulder a responsibility towards developing the system, noting that the country's economic security can only be ensured through a sound and effective public administration.

NATO to threaten Serbs with strikes

BRUSSELS (AP) — After months of indecision, North Atlantic Organisation (NATO) allies tentatively agreed late Wednesday to warn the Bosnian Serbs to either lift their murderous siege of Sarajevo or face air raids, diplomats said.

But the Serbs, apparently seeking to head off NATO air strikes, arranged a quick ceasefire with the United Nations and pledged to withdraw their artillery from around the besieged city and put it under U.N. monitoring.

Despite the Serb announcement, the ambassadors of the 16-nation NATO went ahead and backed a U.S.-French proposal to lay down a deadline for the Serbs, according to diplomats at the meeting.

Under the plan tentatively agreed on, the allies would carry out air strikes against the Serbs if they failed to withdraw within 10 days the more than 500 heavy guns that for nearly two years have been pounding Sarajevo.

NATO was expected to ask U.N. chief Boutros Ghali to decide when to begin the 10-day waiting period, according to diplomats.

Diplomats were consulting with the capitals for final approval, diplomats said. Early in their talks, diplomats had said a consensus emerged that NATO "should take a position that can really be carried out," a senior diplomat said on condition of anonymity.

But the length of their talks — well into the evening — suggested the allies were struggling to gain unanimous approval for a decision that could lead to NATO's first offensive military action in 44 years.

Canada, which has some 2,000 peacekeepers in the region, was worried that any air strikes would invite reprisals from the Serbs and hinder the delivery of desperately needed humanitarian aid to the war's victims.

Diplomats said Canada wanted unspecified guarantees for the safety of its U.N. soldiers.

In Athens, Greek government spokesman Evangelos Venizelos said his country traditionally sympathetic towards Serbs — would not block an allied decision to bomb Serb targets.

Majali defuses uproar in House after Abu Nowar-Dughmi row

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali defused an uproar in the Lower House of Parliament Wednesday by apologising to Deputy Abdul Karim Al Dughmi who threatened to resign when Deputy Prime Minister Ma'n Abu Nowar called one of his proposals "extremist and unsuitable for a deputy."

Dr. Abu Nowar was responding to Mr. Dughmi's request to postpone debate on a draft law on a trade protocol with France because the ministers of finance and planning were absent from the session.

Mr. Dughmi said the minister's remark amounted to a personal insult as well as an insult to the House and demanded an apology. He threatened to resign when House Speaker Taher Al Masri tried to contain the tension by asking for postponing discussion of the issue.

A number of deputies stood by Mr. Dughmi, who said he demanded the apology not just for himself but also for the House.

"Some deputies met the prime minister and we all accepted his apology over the sentence that described Mr. Dughmi's proposal as extremist and unsuitable for a deputy. I will cancel this sentence from the records of the House," Mr. Masri said after a break he called when the uproar broke out.

"I thank you and I accept the apology which is not unexpected from the prime minister and his manners," said Mr. Dughmi, who told the Jordan Times later he would not resign.

Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Al Tal earlier said that Dr. Abu Nowar did not intend to insult Mr. Dughmi but said he withdrew the word "extremist" if the deputy felt it was an insult.

Dr. Abu Nowar had also said that he did not mean any insult to the deputy whom he



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and members of the cabinet attend Wednesday's session of the Lower House of Parliament (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

said he respected and he would apologise to Mr. Dughmi if the deputy thought he meant him any harm.

"But I do not apologise for calling the proposal extremist," because postponing the draft law was unjustified, said Dr. Abu Nowar, adding that the government seeks to work faster in service of the people.

But Mr. Dughmi insisted the minister apologise, and the uproar did not end until Mr. Masri told the House that the prime minister had apologised.

The House voted to postpone discussion of the draft law on the trade protocol with France. The Judiciary Committee has recommended the accord be endorsed.

During the House session Wednesday, Mr. Masri urged the Judiciary Committee to work faster on draft laws that the House had referred to it.

The committee suffered a setback when many of its members resigned in protest against what parliamentary sources described as the dictatorial style of its president, Abdul Baqi Jammo.

While discussing minister's responses to deputies' questions, Islamic Action Front Deputy Hamzeh Mansour said Jordanian nationality was "unjustifiably" withdrawn from

Syria rejects Israeli charge

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian officials Wednesday dismissed Israel's public rebuke that Syria was not doing enough to curb attacks in the South Lebanon area occupied by Israel.

Reacting to the criticism by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the officials said Syria would not act as a policeman for Israeli occupation.

"Syria believes the Lebanese people have a legitimate right to resist the Israeli occupation of their lands," one said.

"Because Israel is refusing to implement U.N. resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon, Syria could not agree in any way to become a policeman for this occupation," he said. "When it ends its occupation resistance will end."

Mr. Rabin, speaking a day after four Israeli soldiers were killed in Lebanon by resistance fighters, accused Syria on Tuesday of not doing its part to curb such attacks.

"Syria could use its influence to prevent the continuation of the Hizbollah activity. Syria isn't the one commanding them it's Iran, Lebanon, but Syria could have used its influence to limit the activity."

One Syrian official said Mr. Rabin was "fooling himself when he ignored the fact that his occupation of Lebanon was the cause of resistance."

On Wednesday Israel accused Syrian President Hafez Al Assad of using guerrilla violence in Lebanon as a lever to try to exact concessions from Israel in peace talks.

Syrian officials in turn accused Israel of escalating tension in South Lebanon to evade making progress at the Arab-Israeli peace talks in which Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians are taking part.

citizens who had lived in Jordan since the 1940s.

Interior Minister Salameh Hammad said Jordanian nationality cannot be withdrawn from any citizen unless the documents upon which he/she attained the nationality were false.

A proposal to amend the nationality law in order to allow Jordanian women to give their nationality to their foreign husbands was referred to the Judiciary Committee last month.

The House also rejected a proposal by Deputy Khalil Haddadin to cancel plans to transform the building of the Ministry of Public Works, which is adjacent to the House, into offices for deputies.

Mr. Haddadin said the plans would cost the treasury an "unacceptable" amount of JD 6 million in costs for constructing another building for the ministry.

But Dr. Abu Nowar said the new building will not in any way cost as much and Deputy Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh said the ministry's building was the only adjacent structure that could be used by deputies.

The House decided to meet twice at 10 a.m. during the month of Ramadan, which begins next week.



REMEMBERING QUEEN ALIA: His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday visits the tomb of the late Queen Alia. King Hussein was accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, daughter of the late Queen, and Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. Queen Alia was killed in a 1977 helicopter crash while returning to Amman from a visit to the southern regions (Petra photo)

King receives Samsung official

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received at the Royal Court Chairman of the Board of Directors of Samsung Electronics Equipment Company Ahmad Issa Murad.

King Hussein expressed his support and concern for the development of Jordanian industries and said he hoped that the nation's industries would be able to compete in international markets to boost the national economy.

The meeting comes two days after Trade and Industry Minister Rima Khalaf deputised for King Hussein at the inauguration ceremony of the JD 3 million Samsung factory which will manufacture electronic equipment.

The factory, an affiliate to Ahmad Issa Murad and Sons company, will produce televisions and microwave ovens in 1994.

In the future, the factory will operate at full capacity, to produce 75,000 televisions and microwave ovens which will cover the needs of the local market.

The production surplus will be exported to foreign countries. In later stages, the company will manufacture refrigerators, computers, washing machines and air-conditioners.

Mr. Murad said in an address at the inauguration ceremony Monday that the company, which plans to export its products to neighbouring Arab and East European countries, had already signed contracts to export televisions to Lebanon.

He said the factory will provide jobs for 130 persons five per cent of whom will be selected from individuals with handicaps in implementation of directives by King Hussein.

The director of Samsung's Middle East Department, who was present at the ceremony, said the establishment of the factory in the Kingdom was one of the fruits of cooperation between Jordan and South Korea.

Abdul Rahman Udwan and other PSD officers, watched exercises in martial arts and took part in some of the troops' sports events.

He distributed award cups to the winning teams in the tug of war, mountain climbing, target-shooting and other competitions.

Later, the Crown Prince visited the Badia training center where he watched exercises and inspected equipment.

In a brief speech on the occasion, Prince Hassan said that the border and Badia force constitute the nucleus of the Armed Forces and had played a special role in defending the nation.

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1,200 more Palestinians complete police training

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Nearly 1,200 Palestinians who will form part of the proposed police force to be deployed in autonomous Jericho and The West Bank Wednesday staged a graduation ceremony after undergoing training in police skills. Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials said.

They said the graduation ceremony took place at Khaw, a Jordanian military/police training facility about 30 kilometres northeast of Amman and was attended by Palestinian Ambassador Al Tayeh Abdul Rahim and senior Jordanian officers from the security departments and armed forces.

The 1,200 join 3,000 soldiers of the Badr Brigade of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) who have already undergone police training, the PLO officials said.

Those graduating on Wednesday were new recruits selected from among applicants from Jordan after a screening process conducted last October and November, they said.

The 4,200-strong unit now awaits PLO orders to move into Jericho and Gaza, the officials said.

They will be joined there by Palestinian policemen, as well as PLO members trained in security and crime investigation skills in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab World.

Under the Sept. 13 Israeli-PLO autonomy agreement, Palestinian police will assume control of internal security in Jericho and the Gaza Strip, the two areas to be evacuated by Israel in the first phase of the self-rule plan.

The Israeli pullout from the areas was supposed to have begun on Dec. 13, but differences over security arrangements, border crossings and the physical area of Jericho delayed the withdrawal.

Reports from Cairo on Wednesday indicated that Israel and the PLO were close to settling the differences.

Several dozen Palestinians from the West Bank who underwent police training as well as acquired skills in personal protection returned to

the occupied territories to assume duties as guards at Palestinian institutions and bodyguards for Palestinian leaders in the West Bank late last year.

Nearly 200 Palestinians, mostly from the Gaza Strip, have also returned to their homes after undergoing similar training in Egypt. Those who got trained in Egypt are expected to be posted in the Gaza Strip while graduates from Jordan are to be sent to Jericho and the rest of the West Bank as self-rule takes hold there in the second phase of the autonomy accord.

Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal has said that he had agreed to a 15,000-strong, lightly armed Palestinian police force to assume control

of international security of the Palestinian areas.

The PLO is seeking a 30,000-strong force, and PLO officials here said they expected Israel to give a green light for a larger force after the 15,000-strong unit is deployed and proves itself capable of maintaining law and order.

The United Nations has agreed to finance the establishment of police academies in Jericho and the Gaza Strip to train recruits from the occupied territories.

According to the PLO officials, several hundreds of those already trained outside have also acquired skills as police instructors and they could serve at the proposed academy.

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of international security of the Palestinian areas.

UNRWA staff to get pay raise

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) will raise staff salaries retroactively to the start of this year and raise the quality of educational and health services to the Palestinian refugees, according to Minister of State Adel Irsheid.

Speaking upon his return to Amman from a visit to Vienna, where he held talks on UNRWA affairs with the agency's Commissioner General Aker Turkmen, Mr. Irsheid said the agency has now allocated additional funds not included in the 1994 budget to finance a programme for improving social, health and educational services to the Palestinian refugees and the infrastructure services in their camps.

Representatives of UNRWA staff committees last December suspended a 36-hour sit-in at the agency headquarters to back demands for a raise after a meeting with Mr. Irsheid in which he promised to follow up their demands.

On Monday, an 18-year-old girl tried to commit suicide by swallowing some pills because she failed in the Tawjihi, 'Khalid told police he shot himself in the stomach.

He was taken to Karak Military Hospital and was listed in fair condition.

Police sources did not indicate where Khalid obtained the unlicensed weapon he used. They seized the gun and are investigating the case.

This year's Tawjihi scores were relatively low, a private school director told the Jordan Times.

In the scientific stream, for example, only 30 per cent of the students who sat for the exams passed, he added.

Failure in school exams plays a significant role in suicide attempts among school students, according to Ismail Abdul Kader of the Ministry of Social Development.

"When students fail their exams, they feel they have disappointed their families," Mr. Abdul Kader had told the Jordan Times in an interview last October.

"Some student's take the desperate measure of taking their own life," he said.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, a Karak student tried to commit suicide after learning he had failed his Tawjihi exams.

Khalid E. was the second student in the last two days to try to take his own life after learning he had failed his exams.

Students vandalise school

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Tuesday arrested nine students from Prince Hassan School in Jabal Al Joufah after they allegedly attacked the school and damaged some of its property, a police report said.

The students told police they attacked the school to protest what they described as unsatisfactory results in the Tawjihi exams.

The report said the perpetrators managed to break school windows, doors and desks before they were arrested by police.

The principal of the school called police when the students started vandalising the school during school hours. Police said they are investigating the incident.

Youth attempts suicide

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"Some student's take the desperate measure of taking their own life," he said.

Iranian embassy marks republic's national day

AMMAN (J.T.) — Iranian Ambassador to Jordan Ahmad Dustmalijan Wednesday voiced hope that Jordan and Iran would work on boosting and bolstering bilateral relations.

The ambassador was speaking at a reception held by the embassy to mark the Islamic republic's national day.

The reception was attended by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, several members of the upper and lower houses of parliament, government officials and members of diplomatic missions in Amman.

In his address, the ambassador outlined development which had taken place since the Iranian revolution and dwelt on Iran's foreign policy.

AMMAN (J.T.) — The German Development Bank (KfW) plans to offer additional aid to the Development and Employment Fund (DEF), and a JD 3 million grant to the fund is expected in the coming few months, according to DEF Director General Mohammad Smadi.

Dr. Smadi told the Jordan Times he discussed the DEF's needs with Hans Peter Neuhoff, head of the KfW Middle East Desk, who is currently on a visit to Jordan.

Mr. Neuhoff was briefed on the fund's programmes and activities and asked that a detailed plan be forwarded to the KfW so that arrangement can be made for the payment of the JD 3 million.

According to Dr. Smadi, the KfW had promised to pay JD7 million towards helping the fund carry out its programmes such as financing small-size income-generating projects for needy families, but it provided only JD 4 million prior to 1992.

He said that the fund, which has a JD 8 million budget for 1994, is concentrating this year on initiating income-generating projects in the rural rather than the urban areas of Jordan where poverty and unemployment are greater.

Dr. Smadi said that the KfW chief studied a report published last November by the European Union (EU), which praised the DEF efforts

of that were unsure.

Princess Wijdan, who was speaking from Washington, said, however, that she planned to eventually display a smaller-scale exhibition of Arab women's artwork at the Jordan National Gallery.

"It is too early to decide for now if the exhibition is a success or not," she said.

"But for these last three days I felt that the people who came were really surprised by the exhibition," and she was optimistic about its future.

The exhibit will stay in Washington until May 15, then move to Harvard, Massachusetts, Chicago, Miami and finally Atlanta.

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Tax on the move

IF AN International Monetary Fund (IMF) certification that Jordan is implementing an economic restructuring programme and is abiding by the programme's provisions is essential before Jordan's creditors would agree to open rescheduling talks, then why are we still debating whether the proposed sales tax is good for the national economy or not? The government maintains that this is indeed the case. The opponents of the tax believe the opposite is true and seem to think that the country has other options to pursue. The government and the business community appear to be still divided on what course to take. Minister of Finance Sami Gammoh has maintained that the new tax would not exceed 20 per cent of the value of the goods and products affected by it, whereas the rate goes up to 60 per cent under existing taxation laws. This assertion, however, has not swayed Jordanian entrepreneurs to endorse the draft law for fear of its fallout and impact on domestic production especially in the industrial sector. There is a genuine fear among the private sector that the new law would be inflationary or could trigger a recession. Some economists also hold the view that any new financial measure should be discussed and incorporated in the context of an overall revamp of the country's tax and customs system. The new sales tax is therefore regarded as a piecemeal approach that lacks the necessary strength and complementarity to succeed. On purely economic grounds, it must be assumed that the government's interpretation of the stand-off is the more solid. Yet not everything in this part of the world can be judged exclusively on its economic merits or the lack of them. While any new financial measure could make good economic sense, it may have a political fallout that could be damaging to the country as a whole especially at a time when the region is going through many upheavals. The big question is whether we can afford a shakeup even when it may be beneficial and necessary in the long run. Clearly, Parliament will have an occasion to debate the new law package all in good time. The Cabinet is expected to submit the new legislation to Parliament for adoption as a matter of high priority. The importance of the debate cannot be overemphasised since the participation of the business community in its formulation cannot on its own substitute for the views of the people as a whole. The representatives of the people in the two chambers should therefore be expected to reflect the sentiment of the country more equitably than any other body and act as the final arbiter. Until that occurs, a final judgement on the question of the sales tax is difficult to make.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT is not enough to describe the assassins who killed the Jordanian diplomat in Beirut as cowards and to condemn their action, but real action should be taken to deter further killings, said Faded Al Faneek, a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday. I do not believe that anything can be done to avenge the assassination of Nayeb Maaytah except through chasing the assassins through the Interpol and other available and internationally accepted and legal means to track down these evil elements, said the writer. We are not calling for Jordan to follow the pattern of the killers and become a murderer but to adopt practical measures to stop further attacks on its diplomats abroad, continued the writer. He said that condemnation of the killers' action cannot bring any justice which ought to be served through legal measures and through the identification of the group perpetrating the killings. The writer said Jordan ought to name the groups, take part actively in tracking down their elements in cooperation with other nations and Interpol and take precautionary measures to protect the diplomats, urged the writer.

A columnist in Al Dostour discussed a decision taken by Egypt to withdraw from the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) which was established in 1989. Saleh Al Qallab said that the ACC which groups Iraq, Jordan, Yemen and Egypt has long been pronounced dead but its benefits for the citizens of these countries have continued. For instance nationals from Egypt continued to enter any of the ACC member states without prior visas and without residence permits, a system which also applies to the nationals of the other countries, noted the writer. He said by pulling out from the ACC, Egypt is forfeiting the rights of the Egyptian nationals and exposing them to new hardships and costing them the right to enter and settle in the ACC states without any complications. It is really surprising to see the Egyptian government taking such a step at a time when the extremists inside Egypt have declared war on foreign tourists, depriving the country of the means to earn hard currency and at a time when Egypt is really in need of solidarity with other Arab states, said the writer.

Food, drug controversy — opportunity for government, challenge for parliament

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THE implications of the food and medicine controversy, which despite the headlines it has caused is (I firmly believe) ultimately healthy and positive, are more far-reaching than many think. It goes without saying, of course, that the controversy is essentially about a specific matter: the quality of the food we eat and the medicine we take, a matter which we still view with real concern. But it is also, more generally, about the performance of the government establishments and authorities entrusted with the task of ensuring such quality, about the morality and ethics of the rising and full-fledged business tycoons (the so-called "whales" and "octopuses") in our society and (equally importantly) about the conduct of the two main parties to the controversy, the Cabinet and the Parliament. It is the latter dimension that I wish to focus on here.

I have heard it from many reliable observers of public affairs in Western countries that most (public or private) misunderstandings, scandals, or crises involving noted political figures, which have become part and parcel of the democratic process itself,

primarily function to test the character of the person involved — in addition to ascertaining the facts. "It is through seeing a person sweat that we are able to judge his/her true ability," says one such observer. There is a great deal of truth in this statement. Regular speeches, interviews and debates do tell us a lot about a candidate or official. But sense and heated situations tell us much more. A few years ago, American presidential candidate Garry Hart was, almost till the very end of his campaign, most impressive among the candidates. It was only when the question of his private affairs was brought into the open that he was put to the test and failed. The issue was not so much that he had had an affair, but that he lied and continued to lie about it. By contrast, vice-presidential nominee in the Bush campaign Dan Quayle was elected to the White House, despite the significant popular anger over the "convenient" way through which he was enabled to do his military service in the National Guard instead of Vietnam, in part because he was able to respond well to criticism and be convincing. Substance is im-

portant, but style is also important.

What applies to individuals applies to institutions, for institutions are run by individuals after all. Up until the health controversy, our recent formed Cabinet and our recently elected Parliament have been both virgin. The feelings of the man in the street towards both bodies have, until the said event, been generally lukewarm. Presently, the picture has dramatically changed.

As for the government, it was viewed from the start (before and after the major reshuffle) as a transitional government set up with a certain short-term political situation in mind. There were those, in fact, who went as far as saying that its composition was odd, hastily done and misguided and that it would most likely make a boring, inept and inefficient government. Slowly but confidently, the Cabinet has proved most such criticism wrong. A close look at its conduct, even before the reshuffle, shows that it has asserted itself quite forcefully. Many of its members have demonstrated extreme diligence, dynamism and promise. Such picture, however, has been visible only either to the insider or to the keen observer. Throughout the health con-

troversy, the government's image seems to have improved substantially, especially in the eyes of the man in the street. After all, the health minister is a cabinet minister. Besides, despite press reports and first-hand rumours about the internal frictions the controversy has caused, the Cabinet as a whole has held pretty well, maintaining (outwardly at least) its composure, patience, solidarity and team spirit. Furthermore, the premier's response at the end of the Parliament's debate was sober, mature, calm, firm and reasonable. In a word, the government seems to have passed the first part of the test very well.

Furthermore, there seems to be a real opportunity for the government to score big victory. In order to do so, it needs to bring the matter to a fully successful conclusion. It has acted wisely by deciding to turn the case to the judiciary. Still, it needs a) to ensure the achievement of speedy, specific, concrete, effective and convincing results, not just rhetoric and b) to make real progress, visible as much as possible, in its repeated promise of administrative reform, for this remains a major challenge — one which is directly related to the food and medi-

cine uproar, a possible "fat" cause.

By contrast, the image of the Parliament has, on the whole, suffered a setback. For one thing, its predecessor, many of whose members are members in the present Parliament, did not (in the opinion of the man in the street) do a good job. For another, though the present Parliament has promised to be more active and interesting, it has so far failed to excite many people, let alone impress them. The said controversy was a golden opportunity for it to achieve something concrete and significant for the people (who rightly or wrongly) view it and expect it to be their champion.

As press reports indicate, there has been an overall disappointment on the part of the people. Most have been upset by the unenthusiastic, unsympathetic, or antagonistic responses to the health minister's testimony. One respondent told the writer, "I could not believe my eyes. The debate in the first session was for the most part bizarre and totally unexpected. The situation is so ironic and reversed. I thought for a moment the health minister was the MP and the MP was the health minister. Who is the representative of the people?" Another said, "Who is ex-

pected to expose mistakes and corruption, the MP or the minister? This is so funny." A third stressed the following point: "Why does an MP demand evidence from the minister? Should not he himself go and look for evidence?"

Clearly, some of the responses may be unfair, but they are indicative of what the man in the street (justly or unjustly) conceives of the role of the Parliament. It should be stressed, however, that many people have been happy with the position of some MPs who they believe have said the right thing, used the right tone and called for the right action. On the whole, we should underscore, the Parliament may have benefited much more from the opportunity which it has presented itself and which may not be repeated in the three years to come. One does not know if, in following up on the food and medicine case, it could still redeem itself.

Be the case as it may, one thing is absolutely certain. During the debates last week and this week, the reputation of some cabinet members and MPs have skyrocketed, the reputation of others has taken a nose-dive (in the mind of the people, of course). This is the beauty of democracy.

Hamas and Arafat: the balance of power

By Israel Shabak

BY NOW it is clear that an important effect of the agreement between Israel and the PLO is the increase in the power of Hamas among the Palestinians of the occupied territories. This makes it doubtful whether, after the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the main part of the Gaza Strip, Yasser Arafat will be able to control it (ruling Jericho constitutes no problem). Arafat's rule over the Palestinians is being challenged from three directions: the leftist factions, principally the PFLP, by the increasingly powerful Hamas; and by the disaffected in the ranks of Fatah. I will not deal here with the last problem.

Potential risks from the PFLP's side can be dismissed for now. According to the well informed Palestinian journalist Khalid Abu Tu'ama, who writes for the West Jerusalem paper Yerushalaim, the PFLP leader in the West Bank, Dr. Riyad Al Malki, "performs the role of a local leader of the opposition, like Netanyahu in Israel." The latter does little against Rabin apart from speeches in the Knesset, leaving the real work to be performed by others, and the same can be said about Malki. But Hamas is another matter.

Hamas' strengths

Hamas is now considered by everybody, the Israeli authorities included, as militarily the strongest Palestinian organisation. Its influence is growing due at least to four different factors. It derives enormous prestige from its increasingly successful guerrilla operations, especially those aimed at the Israeli army. After an ambush in which Hamas guerrillas killed Colonel Mintz, the coordinator of "special activities" in the Gaza Strip, and wounded a major and two soldiers without incurring any losses, many remarked that Fatah had achieved nothing remotely resembling that.

ambush during the 28 years of its existence. Second, Hamas guerrillas generally refrain from clashes with other Palestinian factions, and their assaults on civilians have declined. Third, which in my personal view is the most important, Hamas leaders have a deserved reputation for honesty in financial affairs. They tend to live modestly, often in poverty. In the Gaza Strip, for example, their homes are not situated in the wealthiest neighbourhoods, as are the homes of so many Fatah notables. Owing to that, they are more in touch with the ordinary people. Lastly, the Hamas guerrillas do not engage in vain displays and posturing. They do not walk around armed without purpose shooting into the air in order — as the Fatah Hawks explain it — "to show their presence."

The prestige of Hamas in the Gaza Strip can be shown by the following incident. After a clash between the Fatah Hawks and the Red Eagles of the PFLP in Rafah, violent enough to thwart all attempts to force a ceasefire, Hamas took action and "after two days an ultimatum threatening that unless both sides at once sign a ceasefire, Hamas would dispatch its armed I. A. Din Al Qassam guerrilla units to Rafah to instantly enforce order. Whereupon Fatah and PFLP did indeed sign a ceasefire," according to Davar on 20 December.

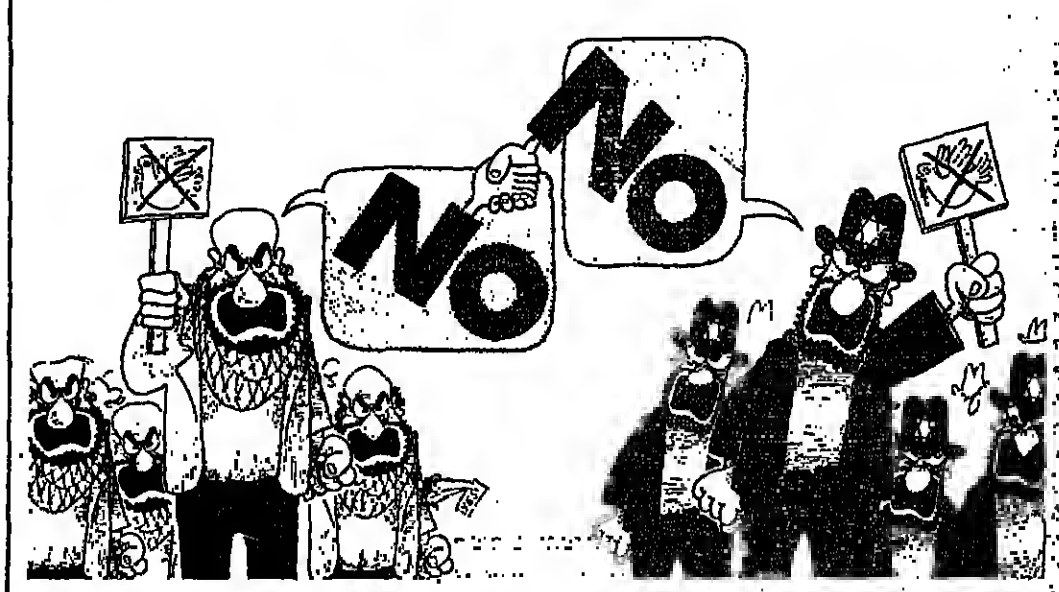
No wonder, therefore, that Aharon Klein (Al Hamishmar, 17 December) reports that the Israeli security forces are scared of Hamas, especially of its power in Gaza. But Klein also says that, all blustering about omniscience of Israel's secret services notwithstanding (in reality they are a bunch of incompetents good only at penetrating Arafat's clique), they now admit that they know next to nothing about Hamas. "After the (Israeli) security force finally decided to talk to

Hamas, it turned out that it did not know who to approach." The chief Israeli negotiator with the PLO, General Amnon Shabak, "let himself be interviewed on Israeli Arabic TV, on which he courteously invited Hamas to join the peace talks, adding that if Hamas chose to form a party for a democratic struggle for its goals, Israel would be favourably disposed". High Israeli officers were instructed to invite anybody they might consider to be a Hamas leader for talks. At the same time, however, Rabin, Peres and military leaders have reiterated Israel's resolve to let Arafat confront Hamas. At this stage it seems that this approach will ultimately prevail.

Shoring up Arafat's position

The question is how Arafat is expected to overcome Hamas and other forms of resistance. The answer of the Israeli sources closest to Rabin is by means of a lot of money and the Palestinian police. The former factor is explained by Alex Fishman in Ma'ariv on December 17, where he quotes "a senior member of the Israeli delegation accompanying Rabin to Cairo" on December 12. "If only Israel had a billion dollars to spare! Everything would then be different. Once Arafat was handed over a cheque for that sum, he could use it to bribe the opposition and buy public support. Arafat's obstinacy and his hope of gaining time partly stem from his lacking the money to enter Jericho and Gaza in a befitting manner." Incidentally, it can be seen from the quote that nothing has changed in Israeli thinking. The Palestinians are still perceived as either coercible or bribable, if not directly by Israel then by Arafat on Israel's behalf. Since, however, Fishman's sources claim that Israel does not have "a billion dollars to spare", and that "the U.S. and Saudi Arabia", which have the money

M. KAHIL



refuse to give it to Arafat, "Israel has no choice but to stall the talks for as long as possible, in the hope that something new may yet crop up."

It turns out, however, that in addition to Arafat's having no money Israel has another reason for stalling the talks, revealed by Ran Edelist in Ha'ir (a Tel Aviv Friday paper) on December 17:

"The implementation of the agreement has been postponed due to Arafat's extraordinary organisational inefficiency. He has been unable to assemble the Palestinian troops which, as agreed in the secret talks between General Shabak and Nabil Sha'th, were to become the Palestinian police force. Israeli consent to implementing the agreement was conditional on Arafat's appearing in Jericho and Gaza with sizable manpower and lots of money to spend. But about a week before the deadline it turned out that instead of several thousand warriors, Arafat commands scarcely several hundred, who would be swallowed by Hamas for breakfast. Even more importantly, Arafat does not have the money to fuel a bureaucratic, conceived of so as to convey an appearance of democratic administration. As soon as Rabin noticed it, he was in a position to force Arafat to a deadline postponement to teach him a lesson in efficient

business management."

I agree with Edelist's factual estimate, but I doubt, however, whether Arafat, even if given "billions of dollars", is capable of speedily assembling a sizable force that would be loyal to him and capable of defeating Hamas. But if Arafat now has under his command only "several hundred" loyal fighters, this means that he had fooled everybody concerned, the state of Israel and its supposedly omniscient secret services included, that he commanded thousands of loyal troops. Some of my informants believe, however, that Arafat himself, rather than others, was also fooled. He really believed that he had thousands of loyal cadres under his command. After all, he often used to visit them in countries like Yemen or Sudan. What he did not realise was that most of them had already settled down. At a rather advanced age they are most reluctant to be bothered policing the autonomy and fighting Hamas.

Why the talks are stalled

I conclude therefore that Israel and Arafat, whose interests in this matter coincide, are faced with only two realistic alternatives. The first is to stall the negotiations in the hope that, as Fishman's source put it, "something new may yet crop up". The second, for which there is a precedent, is to turn the Gaza Strip into

something very like the Israeli "Security Zone" in Southern Lebanon. Just as the Israeli army is the real power there and the so-called South Lebanon Army merely a decoration, so the Israeli army will continue to be the real power in the Gaza Strip, while the Palestinian police will direct traffic, track and punish thieves and engage in frequent parades; in short, continue to do what it already does. Officers of the "Shimshon" covert unit have already declared that they will continue their activities after the withdrawal, but I think that more Israeli troops will be needed. True, a proper cover name will be needed, but we may be sure that Shimon Peres will provide one. After all, when the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon began in 1978, Peres called it "good fence activities". Something similar will be invented for the continuing occupation of the Gaza Strip.

Some Gazans seem to sense such a development already. When Michal Sela of Davar toured the Gaza Strip to talk to local farmers, fishermen and businessmen, she was told by a strawberry grower: "Our greatest fear is that Israel wants both to withdraw from and to remain in the Gaza Strip. In the same way as in the 'Security Zone' in South Lebanon." I cannot but share these fears — Middle East International, London.

ANC's army said unable to curb right-wing violence

By David Tucker

JOHANNESBURG — Nelson Mandela has warned right-wing saboteurs that he may order the African National Congress' guerrilla army to retaliate against them if the white-led South African security forces do not.

But military analysts said such a move could be suicidal for the guerrillas and politically embarrassing for the ANC, which is expected to lead a government of national unity after elections in April.

Simon Baynham, research director at the Africa Institute of South Africa, dismissed the ANC leaders' threat as ludicrous.

"Most of MK's (Umkhonto We Sizwe) members and leaders inside the country are

known and would be quickly taken out by the security forces," he said.

On the election campaign trail through the right-wing heartland of the Orange Free state last week, Mandela repeatedly said white rightist violence backing demands for an Afrikaner homeland could provoke a reaction in which thousands could die.

"They are using force, we have got our own force, we have Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK), both inside and outside the country... better equipped than the Afrikaners," Mandela said.

"We are saying they are playing with fire. Innocent people, both black and white, are going to die," he said.

He said MK, the ANC military wing known as the Spear of

the Nation, might act if South African security forces failed to.

Baynham said MK was never militarily effective during its history as a liberation army and there was no reason to believe it would be now.

"MK achieved nothing really, except as a symbol of strength against apartheid," Baynham said.

Most MK fighters were in other countries. They would only be able to return "in dribs and drabs," he said.

MK could only hit back at whites in general and not at the extremists responsible for a wave of sabotage attacks against ANC property, trains and electricity pylons, he said.

"If they decided to act, they could do what APLA (Azanian People's Liberation

Army) has done and strike at white farms and whites gathering at clubs," said Baynham.

In the worst-case scenario this could coincide with a general uprising in black townships.

The ANC suspended its armed struggle in 1990 after President F.W. de Klerk legalised it and Mandela was freed from prison.

Some MK units are being incorporated into a national force grouping former guerrillas, soldiers from the apartheid-created black homelands and South African regular forces.

They are charged with keeping the peace, particularly in the embattled townships, in the run-up to the election, the first in which all races will be allowed to vote.

But force commander Brigadier Gabriel Ramushwana said on Monday there were problems within the force and it may not be ready by the elections.

A newspaper report on Sunday said the force was a sham, suffering from drunkenness, indiscipline and desertion.

Jakki Cilliers, director of the Independent Institute for Defence Policy, said Mandela was "throwing petrol on a fire" with his remarks.

The ANC leader, who is expected to become South Africa's first black president, was sending the wrong message, he said.

"The rightwing is speaking 'war, war'. The same should not be said of Mandela who is going to lead a government of

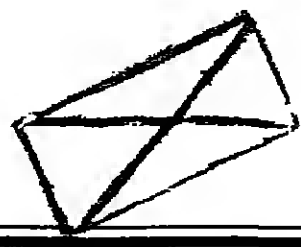
national unity and will be calling on the heads of the police and the defence force to act against the rightwing, not MK," Cilliers said.

He too said "terrorism" was its only tactic should it decide to take on the right.

ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamooepa said Mandela's remarks were intended to stir the white-led security forces into action.

The arrests of five suspected right-wing bombers on Monday was an encouraging sign that had been welcomed by Mandela.

"We said that if the security forces continued to allow rightwingers to act with impunity we could be forced to act to defend democracy. Let's hope it won't be necessary," Mamooepa said.



Preserving the purity of bedouin songs

By Mohammad Mashargah

Researchers in bedouin songs and music believe that the isolation of Badia citizens from urban areas lies behind their continued preservation of the purity of language and tune of Arabic music.

The bedouins tend to prolong the effect of the endings with what seems to sound like a "tremolo" if they reflect or imitate the vast deserts around. Some of the wordings of the songs move, on the pages of the bedouins like the movement of camels in the desert. Some of these songs are called "Jidda" and "Hijai". The wordings of the bedouins were considered a kind of culture common to all inhabitants of the Badia region.

The bedouins language is considered by some as a middle line between the spoken and classical Arabic. It is probably due to its easy language and song tunes. The songs are based on the poems and verses including those of the ancient Jahiliyah (pre-Islamic) era.

The rhythm plays a distinguished part in the traditional Jordanian bedouins songs as they are rather short, original and the beauty of the tunes are rather overwhelming and impressive.

Dr. Mohammad Ghawanmeh, professor of music at

Yarmouk University, sheds more light on the bedouin music and singing by nothing that it is rather characterised by a special ritual. Some of the solo or chorus singing is done to the accompaniment of rababah. If there are a number of singers they traditionally divide themselves into two equal groups. They sing after work for entertainment and joy. The tunes are simple and slowly flowing.

According to Ghawanmeh, the Hidda singing in Jordan takes the form of short two-line verses with one rhyme, changing all through the song. This popular

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

bedouin singing reflects emotional excitement on the part of the singers and is mainly used in rejoicing over certain happy occasions such as weddings.

Ghawanmeh, who is now entrusted with the task of setting up a centre in Amman for the study of bedouin singing and music, hopes that the project would serve as a research and reference centre on bedouin songs and musical instruments.

Munir Bashir, secretary general of the Arab Music Academy, told an academy meeting here last week: "Remember these words. The Ghawanmeh project will

serve as an important research centre in bedouin culture for Arab and foreign scholars."

The academy's executive bureau had earlier taken a decision to support the idea of the centre as proposed by the Arab Centre for the Preservation of Bedouin Songs and Music Heritage. It endorsed the idea of providing qualified people and researchers to work in this centre.

If implemented, the centre would be the first of its kind in the Arab World to help preserve the bedouin heritage and culture.

Bedouin singing assumes a prominent traditional place among the various types of singing. In Jordan it has a special distinguished nature and is still widely spread in many parts of the country where modern Arabic and foreign songs are also flourishing.

Participants in the academy meeting were divided over the way in which bedouin heritage can be preserved. Some thought it is better done by collecting and documenting the bedouin songs while others peddled the idea of modernising the existing bedouin songs with a view to preserving the cultural heritage.

Indeed there have been several attempts by young singers to develop the bedouin singing through the use of modern musical instruments. A few have actually achieved some progress, as the modern singing began to attract the youth who have already tasted vigorous

foreign music.

But a number of local musicians like Walid Al Hashim, Tareq Al Nasser and Nasser Sharaf have criticised this move as an attempt to sabotage the bedouin or the traditional bedouin singing.

This view was supported by Ali Abu Fhadra, president of the Jordanian Musicians Association, who said that most of the young musicians who developed the bedouin singing were not academically qualified to compose, noting that the modern musical equipment were incapable of catering to the requirements of the actual bedouin tunes.

Dr. Abdul Hamid Hamam, teacher of Arabic music at Yarmouk University, noted that the bedouin culture is never written but transmitted verbally from one singer to another and from one generation to another. He said that efforts ought to be focused on field studies and research work and there should be a survey of the Jordanian and nearby Badia regions in the course of documenting the bedouin culture.

Musicians agree therefore that the establishment of a centre in Amman to preserve bedouin culture and a museum to preserve bedouin musical instruments is of a paramount importance. Such a centre, they said, could provide the natural atmosphere for researchers to work and for their efforts to succeed.

Short stories from the north

by Khalil Kandeel

The writing of fiction is a relatively recent literary form in Jordan. It started as imitation of European fiction, but by time it acquired its own identity though not completely, for the influence of Western writers is still evident, not to mention Egyptian writers who were the pioneers of modern Arabic fiction. Although there were few Jordanian fiction writers in the sixties the number grew considerably in the seventies and the eighties and it had also noticeably improved ever since.

Precedence was for short novels at the beginning, but gradually short stories emerged intensely and gained recognition in the eighties and now Jordan has some good short story writers. Among them Khalil Kandeel who was born in Irbid in 1951 where he pursued his elementary and secondary education. He nourished an interest in writing pretty early, thus in 1974 he published his first story in Al-Dustour newspaper followed by several stories particularly in Al-Jabi magazine.

His first collection *Tattoo Of The Heavy Shoe* came to being in 1981 published by Jordan Writers' Association. In 1990 the United Arab Emirates' Writers' Union published his second collection *The Silence* which is being reviewed in this article.



Khalil Kandeel

vered terrain is quite remarkable in Kandeel's writing. Kandeel doesn't follow the classical method of giving the figures full description, rather lets his readers find that out by themselves through shrewd similes and squeezed dialogues. Nor does he follow conventional narration though he belongs to a middle generation that belongs to typical Jordanian social and cultural ambience; hence his recurrent dealing with indigenous themes congenial to his psychosocial upbringing.

In this respect we see him sensitive to the misery of the weak in the "traditional" society especially women as is clear in *The Scents*, *The Barrier*, *The Silence* and to the bereaved souls as in *Mohammad Al Yarghoul* the

BOOK REVIEW

black young man from a small village in the Jordan Valley, or in the Bet where an old carrier accepts the bet to carry three sacks of flour as he has no other choice but to do that if he wants to feed himself and his old wife, or in the *Body* the story of a manual labourer who got sick out of malnutrition and lost his remuneration.

On the other hand the author gets enthusiastic about unknown individuals who despise severe punishment or even death for the cause of their country as in *The Scent Of Homeland* or in the *Anthem* where a young Palestinian dies at the hands of Israeli soldiers. Then without warning a "queer" tune grates on our ears and we are struck with a theme, hidden between the folds of the book, unfamiliar to Arab societies. Sexuality or sex literature as is known to the West is unacceptable to all Middle Eastern peoples because it is a delicate and feeling-scratching subject to deal with over.

Upon asking him why he opts to tackle such a dangerous theme he retorts that in works of creativity nothing should be a taboo "and mind you, Arab modernists all over the Arab World are dealing freely with this subject which is part of an intended cultural shock."

The intervals is an audacious story about a youngman and a girl who sneaks secretly to his room in a rainy morning.

The theme deals with persons of different walks of life and social standing, unknown to each other, secretly meeting for a few moments then vanishing into the tumultuous life current. Meanwhile, exchanging glances and stirring some ideas about each other, as in *The Bus*, is a common subject which different authors embarked on before, especially in European literature.

Kandeel's language is almost poetic and his vocabulary is rich indeed but what most catches the eye in Kandeel's writing is his similes which denote sharp observation and richness in literary background. "The night was frozenly black", "he felt a modern tension", "I felt at that moment a wild awakening for life", "her body was closed on irritating silence" and so forth.

We can say that Kandeel is one of the good story writers in Jordan. Maybe even in the Arab World.

Mohammad Daoud Tahboub

Mislaid a stuffed lobster? Contact Paris lost property

PARIS (R) — Lost a human skull? Or missing a giant stuffed lobster? Surely someone must have noticed their wooden leg isn't in the usual place?

Unclaimed, they languish on the shelves of the Paris Lost Property Office, alongside a surfboard, several inflatable sex dolls, a full sado-masochist's kit and thousands of more humdrum items.

Row after row of pink numbered labels dangle from each of the more than 110,000 UFOs (unidentified found objects) handed in every year.

Quite literally, jewels and the occasional nugget have turned up among the everyday paraphernalia of hats, keys, skis, umbrellas and handbags.

Employee Pietro Alesi recounts how one person brought in three gold ingots left in an underground train by their absent-minded owner who claimed them the next day.

But it was months before an opera singer claimed jewels worth 800,000 francs (\$130,000) she had lost with her vanity case. "She was performing abroad," he said.

Mr. Alesi says finders frequently hand in jewels or sums of money up to 50,000 francs (\$8,500).

A few years ago, a car thief discreetly returned France's secret plan for the defence of its former African colony, Chad.

Guns, knives, drugs and items regarded as immoral, such as the sado-masochist's kit found in a public square in the seedy chic district, are destroyed.

They are seldom claimed anyway, said office Manager Eric Maire.

Most items are more commonplace — "anything that people carry around not firmly tied to their body", Mr. Alesi said.

Latest figures list 1,264 umbrellas handed in during an unusually rainy December, plus 673 handbags, 464 valuables, 274 pairs of spectacles and 80 cameras.

A sign of the times, the office receives a growing number of laptop computers and portable telephones.

The unclaimed skull ar-

rived 15 years ago. No one quite remembers how it got there.

The rest of the unclaimed flotsam has a much shorter shelf life to avoid swamping the office, known to Parisians as "Les Morillons" after the quiet street where it is located.

The office has introduced computer searches to allow inquiries by telephone — even from abroad — and spare owners a fruitless visit, Mr. Maire said.

He said the office sent about 600 letters a day to owners of identifiable lost property such as personal documents or luggage with name tags.

Owners of UFOs are required to give a precise description to prove ownership. They must produce a copy to recover a lost key.

Unclaimed items — more than two thirds of those handed in — become state property.

Clothing is destroyed or auctioned within three months. Bicycles, handbags and luggage are kept for six months. Keys are melted down and sold as scrap.

Unclaimed French identity documents are destroyed. Foreign passports are returned to the relevant embassy since the French state has no right to dispose of documents it has not issued.

Mr. Maire said a new problem was establishing where to return documents issued by defunct states, such as passports from the Soviet Union.

Claiming lost property can have unexpected consequences. Mr. Maire said a girl who had run away from home in Germany was traced when she collected lost property and Les Morillons advised her embassy.

Valuables — jewellery, watches, money above 50 francs (\$8) — are stored in safes for up to three years. Finders may claim them after a year but are not allowed to sell them until they become full legal owners 30 years later.

Owners recovering property are charged a 25-franc (\$4) fee, plus three per cent of the value of items worth more than 5,000 francs (\$850) as assessed by a sworn expert.

Dutch fear for the future of their own language

By Abigail Levene

STERDAM — The Dutch are worried the expansion of the European Union (EU) will sound the death knell for their mother tongue.

A longer content of sit and watch while English and German and Dutch are also spoken in the Dutch Antilles and Surinam — a legacy of the Dutch colonial empire.

Support for the language has come from the highest quarters.

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands has described Dutch as "the bearer of our identity, which we want to uphold and protect in a unifying Europe."

by a foundation for the promotion of the Dutch language.

The suggestion by Dutch Education Minister Jo Ritzen three years ago that at least a quarter of university teaching should be conducted in English caused domestic uproar. Many foreign newspapers reported that English was to become the official language of the Netherlands.

"Dutch is to remain *harakiri*," remarked the Belgian French-language newspaper *Dinamische Maat* at the time.

"The Netherlands has decided to sacrifice its national language on the altar of Brussels," commented the Italian daily *La Stampa*.

Parliament was finally forced to pass largely superfluous legislation enshrining Dutch as the official language of higher education.

Temper flared again in the Netherlands and among the Dutch-speaking Flemish population of Belgium last December.

Shortly after the European Union agreed to accord the languages of all member countries equal official status, it was decided that the new Spanish-based European trade marks office would handle requests in only five languages.

These would be English, French, German, Spanish and Italian.

"If the union really is multilingual, why should Dutch be shunted to one side?" asked sociologist Abram De Swaan of Amsterdam University.

Beheydt warned: "Favouring some union language over others is a mistake."

Used Languages, set up by the European Community in 1982 to help minority tongues survive the onslaught of a unified Europe and an English-dominated mass media, says Dutch does not fall within its definition of a minority language.

It concerns itself with the fate of regional tongues such as Frisian, the second official language of the Netherlands, which is spoken in the northern province of Friesland.

De Swaan argues that the Dutch should accept the supremacy of English in the European Union and realise this does not mean the Dutch language is doomed to die in the Netherlands.

"Dutch is alive and kicking and in perfect health," he said.

The Bureau for Lesser

languages within the official European context would be fatal for Dutch."

Belgium's Flemings have long pursued a more aggressive cultural policy than their Dutch neighbours.

Last November Brussels threatened to boycott an embryonic European Defence Force unless Dutch was accepted as an official language, along with French and German.

"I want Dutch to be treated with respect. Why don't they drop French?" said Belgium's Dutch-speaking Defence Minister Leo Delcroix, defying warnings by senior military officers that an extra language could damage the efficiency of the Eurocorps.

But not everyone is pessimistic about the future of Dutch.

The Bureau for Lesser

U.S. teens — Virgins and proud of it

WASHINGTON (AP) — American teenagers, long some of the most promiscuous youngsters in the world, are choosing chastity in rapidly growing numbers.

Three decades after the sexual revolution and free love, churches, schools and governments across the country are preaching virginity as a way to fight the spread of AIDS and underage pregnancy.

A chastity campaign by

several U.S. churches, including the 59-million-member Roman Catholic Church, was launched this year under the slogan, "true love waits."

Teens who want to be card-carrying members of the Morality Movement are issued cards reading: "I make a commitment to God, myself, my family,

those I date, my future mate, and my future children to be sexually pure until the day I enter the covenant marriage relationship."

The organisers hope to display thousands of signed cards on the mall in front of the capitol in Washington at a July 29 demonstration that will also be attended by

Christian rappers.

"The nation will not be able to ignore such a united statement from teenagers," said Richard Ross, one of the campaign's coordinators.

Eighty per cent of 14-year-olds in the United States are virgins, one study

shows. But by the time these children are 20, only 14 per cent of the males and 23 per cent of females are still virgins, another study shows.

But despite the numbers, the Hollywood version of high school life — debauched parties and cheerleaders hopping into bed with dashing quarterbacks

— is passe, as teenagers put emphasis on keeping their virginity, campaigners say.

Virginity clubs, like the Abstinence Girls in Baltimore, Maryland, are springing up, offering students a chance to develop defences against carnal temptations.

Even the federal government's new drive to fight AIDS advises that abstinence is the safest sex of all.

Intellectual property and creativity

By Jean-Claude Elias

When people illegally duplicate original music cassettes, video tapes or computer software, they are generally conscious of the fact that they are doing something wrong. After all, obtaining for free a product you are supposed to pay for is basically wrong. It's simple and doesn't take a law degree to understand.

Making a free copy, for your own personal use only, of a personal computer (PC) programme, from a friend who has purchased the original is already considered as a "crime". It is however much less serious than illegally duplicating the programme in order to resell quantity copies and make pure profit out of them.

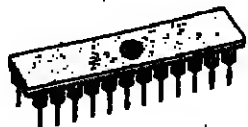
In computer jargon, illegal duplication is called "piracy" and the perpetrators are "pirates". To different degrees, software piracy is widely practiced from California to India, from Europe to the Middle East. In a truly positive effort, recent laws in Jordan have been clearly defined (Copyright Law No. 22 of 1992) but their proper enforcement is yet to be seen.

The only damage pirates think they are causing is depriving the original authors from making more revenue, and when these authors are large, rich, multi-national corporations (Microsoft for instance) it even sometimes makes the pirate feel good about it! The real damage is hidden and even more serious.

In an environment like Jordan, and except for a very small minority that uses only original software, PC users know very well that it doesn't pay to develop software. Why should anyone spend weeks, months, sometimes years of effort, difficult research and hard work if they know their software can be "stolen" (copied) one day after its market release?

The real damage caused by software piracy is the void it creates by preventing the birth of a software industry. We know that in the United States, thanks to a tough copyright law enforcement, software companies have become more important and more profitable than hardware manufacturers. Starting a software industry, provided protection laws are well enforced, is easier

chip talk



than computer manufacturing. It doesn't require electronics, chips, silicon, nor metal. All it takes is brains, pencils and papers.

The development a few years ago of two Arabisation systems, Ameer in Jordan and Nafitha in Bahrain proved extremely successful, technically speaking. Piracy, unfortunately has virtually killed the products.

Countries like Jordan can tremendously benefit from locally produced software. The potential is available but is now dormant. Programming is as much of an art as it is a technique. Genuine art requires creativity. Piracy is literally killing the creativity of software specialists.

When a software product is marketed in the Middle East, its authors usually try to integrate in it more anti-copying features than they would normally do to market the same in Canada for instance. No anti-copying system however is perfect and "hackers" always succeed in breaking even the toughest one. A shame in itself, this state of affairs tends to slow down software development for the area.

Some Jordanian software specialists explain that as much as half of their development time and effort is spent on imagining anti-copying schemes in order to make it more difficult for the pirates to break in. A huge dose of creativity is therefore spent not to produce better software but to reduce the risk of copying, knowing it can never be brought to nil. It cannot get more negative.

The question remains: When is the already applicable law going to be enforced?

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

TIME FOR RIB-TICKLING READING

DUMB-BELLS

A DUMB-BELL is one that is dull and stupid, usually a male

- * No one can accuse him of being scatterbrained. He hasn't any brains to scatter.
- * Wisdom often comes with age, but with him age came alone.
- * He has one of those mighty minds — mighty empty.
- * An intelligent thought dies quickly in his head — it can't stand solitary confinement.
- * He's always putting off decisions — he's waiting for a brainy day.
- * He even wrinkles his brow while reading the comics.
- * He's one guy that must have a sixth sense. There's no evidence of the other five.
- * His parents always signed his report card with an X, so the teacher wouldn't know that anyone who could read and write had a son like that.
- * He's so dumb, he waters his garden with whisky to grow stewed tomatoes.
- * When the librarian asked him if he wanted a heavy book or a light one, he answered, "it doesn't matter — I have my car outside."

SAY IT IN ARABIC

CORRESPONDENCE

- I must write a letter to my friend.
Yajib ann aktob risaleh lla sadeeki.
- This letter is urgent and important.
Hazihi al risaleh aajila wa hamma.
- With hope and respect, I write to you.
Ma'a ihtirami wa ashami aktob ilaika hazihil risaleh.
- Your letter gave me great pleasure.
Lakad sarraatni risalatok kathiran.
- Much love from me.
Laka minni azeema hobbi.
- I hope that my letter will find you in the best state of health and happiness.
Ata'ash'sham ann yasilak maktoubi fee absan halatis-sib'ha was'saada.
- * Dear Zaki.
Azizi Zaki.
- * My dear wife.
Zawjatil aziza.
- * My affectionate son.
Waladil habib.
- * Dear Madam.
Sayyidatil aziza.
- * Dear Mr. Hussein.
Azizi as-sayyed Hussein.
- * My loving mother/uncle/aunt.
Omml/ammi/ammati al aziza (fem.) al-aziz (mas.).
- * Yours faithfully/sincerely (among friends).
Al-mokhless.
- * Yours truly (among businessmen).
Al mokhless.
- * Yours affectionately (among members of family).
Al mohibb.

HUMOUR

- * A woman married four who all died in the prime of their youth. After marrying the fifth, who was going to die, she sat beside him and began to slam her face.

pull violently her hair and repeat at the same time moving words as saying: "Who will take care of me after your departure?"

The dying man, with half-open eyes, deplorably answered her:

"It is the sixth husband, of course!"

- * A girl, embracing her mother, bitterly began to cry: "I'm fed up, mum. I want to be separated from my fiancée."

MOTHER: "Why, darling?"

DAUGHTER: "Because he's an atheist."

MOTHER: "How?"

DAUGHTER: "Because he doesn't believe in hell!"

MOTHER: "It's very simple, my little child. He'll soon realise the real fact when he gets married."

- * At a party, one of the invitees caught sight of a girl whom he knew very well. She was dressed in black. Turning to his friend, he said:

- "What's wrong with her? She wears black!"

- "But, as I know, she hasn't got married yet."

- "I see, and for this very reason she looks so sad."

COOKING IS FUN

HANIM SALATA (My Lady's Salad)

TO SERVE SIX INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb cooked chicken.
- 3 hard boiled eggs, quartered.
- 1 tablespoon wine vinegar.
- 3 stalks white celery
- 12 black olives, heart white cabbage, salt and pepper
- ½ pint wine dressing.

METHOD:

Shred cabbage and celery very finely, mix with the onions and seasoning, stir in the vinegar and arrange at the bottom of a salad bowl. Cover with the shredded chicken and the hard-boiled eggs. Pour the wine dressing over the whole and decorate with olives. Serve well chilled.

PERPLEXITIES

U.S.A.

The letters forming three of the words in each of the following sentences, when rearranged, make the name of one of the United States of America. The problem is to discover which three words to choose in each line.

- (1) He instructed the men on the old warship.
- (2) The red hunter made a dash after a lion.
- (3) Her son was at the mine today.

For everything there is a season

By E. Yaghi

The following incident occurred in Madaba

Today was the day of the wedding and little five-year-old Bilal was most excited, for he loved such celebrations. He had fun watching the drummer beat on the drums, and he liked to drink as much Pepsi as he could and he liked to dart in and out between the dancing and clapping women. He also liked to dress up in his wedding suit and play big brother to his younger sibling. It was about ten in the morning and his mother was scolding, "hold still now! Let me comb your hair. We have to catch the bus so we will be there at my friend's house for her wedding."

As she spoke, she cornered the boy against the wall and when she violated his scalp he protested with a loud, "ouch!"

Ignoring his protests, she ordered: "There now, you're finished. Go and call your grandmother and tell her we're ready to go and if she's not done yet, tell her to hurry up!"

Bilal jumped away from her grip with a yell and sprang to his grandmother's room to see if she was ready. Delighted when she assured him that she would be out in a minute, he ran back to inform his mother and seeing his younger brother playing with some toy blocks, gave him a sharp cuff on the back of his neck for good measure.

Within a few minutes, Bilal, his younger brother, mother and grandmother departed from their home and walked towards the bus stop. The two children chased each other and ran on ahead as their mother remarked to her mother-in-law: "It's such a nice day for a wedding! The weather is so warm for January. I'm glad that my friend is happily going to wed. She's quite happy and excited. We went to school together and have known each other since we were in the first grade."

Her mother-in-law agreed about the weather and then advised that Im-Bilal better keep her eye on her boys. The mother called to them laughing and said, "wait a minute, not so fast." Bilal thought this was a great time to shout and have fun for as his mother had often said, for everything there is a season and now was the time to laugh.

Soon, the great red and silver monster of a bus screeched to a halt and the small boys climbed up the high looking steps ahead of their mother and grandmother. Bilal insisted that he and his brother sit on a seat alone, for he felt very grown up and wanted to

prove that he was a man and independent. He pressed his face against the window and stared out at the people going about their business and cars beeping their horns. He could hardly wait to get to the wedding. He was sure he would have a lot of adventures being as naughty as he could, drinking as much soda as he could and if he was lucky, there might even be some cake. Perhaps too, he would find some boys his own age and prove to them that he was stronger and could jump higher than they could.

It seemed that he had somehow dozed off when he heard his mother's voice calling him: "Bilal! Wake up and stop rubbing your eyes, give your younger brother another cuff on the back of his neck and asked: "Mom, are you there?"

"Yes," she replied and then, "and don't keep hitting your little brother! Now the people are going to get off at the next stop. Hold my hand before you go down the bus steps."

His mother and grandmother rose to stand at the next stop. He jumped up and squeezed himself in front of them, eager to show his independence. His younger brother tried to follow, but his grandmother held his hand. Bilal knew he wasn't going to listen to anyone. He was a man, couldn't everyone see that? He shoved and pushed his way to the front of the bus as his mother yelled: "Bilal, wait for us. Don't get off the bus alone!"

Mothers he thought with disgust, they're always nagging and making their kids do things they don't want to. The busses now were within his reach. He hopped off and at once started to cross the street in front of an oncoming bus which he had failed to notice. The other great monster of steel braked and roared to a stop, but too late for little Bilal. His small body was no match for the monster which threw him many feet away from the sight of the original collision. The boy died instantly. Who could say who was really at fault? Perhaps the blame should be shared by all involved. Bilal's mother and his grandmother should have tried to control the boy's exuberance more. The driver of the bus on which Bilal was riding should have paid attention to his descending passengers and the driver of the oncoming bus should have been on the alert for possible collision with any descending passengers. The day of the wedding, which should have been a time to laugh, became a time to cry. For there is a time to live and a time to die, a time to laugh and a time to cry and for everything, there is a season, up to the human mind. God also endowed the gift of the power to reason.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Feb. 10

8:30 **Flesh And Blood**
King's Strings
Steve is refused to join the rock 'n' roll band formed by Eddie and friends until he promises to bring a video camera along.

9:00 **Talk Show**
9:30 **The Campbells**
Captain Sims and Thomas go to New York to sell their goods; their sailing trip on Lake Erie gets them into a lot of trouble.

9:10 **Da Beat's On**
10:00 **News In English**
10:20 **The Secret Of Coach 13**

Travelling by train from Paris to Moscow proves thrilling and quite dangerous for travellers in Coach 13, as a gang, dealing with forged icons, happens to be on the train.

Friday, Feb. 11

8:30 **Walter And Emily**
Walter and Emily find it extremely hard to tell Julia, Emily's sister who's staying with them, that she is an unwelcome guest in their house.

9:10 **G.P.**
Smash
Kathy, the doctor, is suffering from depression after her miscarriage and Jeff, who's son suffered a broken leg, is to sue the drivers' company for damages.

10:00 **News In English**
10:20 **Scene Of The Crime**
The Girl Who Cried Lupo

A simple story of sexual harassment by a company president develops into a life-threatening situation, involving the police and crime gangs.

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Rock Video

Steve is refused to join the rock 'n' roll band formed by Eddie and friends until he promises to bring a video camera along.

9:00 **Talk Show**
9:30 **The Campbells**
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Sunday, Feb. 13

8:30 **You Bet Your Life**
The weekly entertaining quiz show, hosted by Bill Cosby

9:10 **G.P.**
Smash
Kathy, the doctor, is suffering from depression after her miscarriage and Jeff, who's son suffered a broken leg, is to sue the drivers' company for damages.

10:00 **News In English**
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A simple story of sexual harassment by a company president develops into a life-threatening situation, involving the police and crime gangs.

10:00 News In English

10:20 **Island Son**
Life Sentence
Daniel's hospital becomes the place where an ex-convict seeks medical treatment while Daniel is to receive an expensive present on his birthday.

9:00 **Talk Show**
9:30 **The Campbells**
Captain Sims and Thomas go to New York to sell their goods; their sailing trip on Lake Erie gets them into a lot of trouble.

9:10 **Da Beat's On**
10:00 **News In English**
10:20 **The Secret Of Coach 13**

Travelling by train from Paris to Moscow proves thrilling and quite dangerous for travellers in Coach 13, as a gang, dealing with forged icons, happens to be on the train.

Monday, Feb. 14

8:30 **The Torkelsons**
Aunt Poison
Each member of the Torkelsons has a different "priority" when they come to discuss the great wealth they are bequeathed, after the death of a rich aunt.

9:10 **G.P.**
Smash
Kathy, the doctor, is suffering from depression after her miscarriage and Jeff, who's son suffered a broken leg, is to sue the drivers' company for damages.

10:00 **News In English**
10:20 **Scene Of The Crime**
The Girl Who Cried Lupo

A simple story of sexual harassment by a company president develops into a life-threatening situation, involving the police and crime gangs.

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9:10 Wild Jack

Starring: John Shredler
By coming to the city, Jack finds out that he is the custodian of a sum of money left behind by his deceased friend. He is forced to stay as he suspects a plot to get hold of the money.

9:00 **Talk Show**
9:30 **The Campbells**
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Travelling by train from Paris to Moscow proves thrilling and quite dangerous for travellers in Coach 13, as a gang, dealing with forged icons, happens to be on the train.

11:00 Night Court

The new Judge
The new judge Watson tests Dan's integrity and honesty when he offers to bribe him to drop certain cases.

9:10 **G.P.**
Smash
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Glyndebourne buries rustic charm, moves into 21st century

By Jill Serjeant
Reuters

GLYNDEBOURNE, England — The curtain is about to rise on Britain's first new opera house for 60 years. But the musical arena which promises to be the star of its own first night is to be found not in London or Edinburgh but in the garden of a rambling 15th century manor house nestling in the green fields of Sussex in southern England.

Glyndebourne, the private English opera house as famous for its picnics on the lawns as its world renowned productions, has traded its rustic charm for a modern brick and concrete theatre fit for the 21st century.

In a swipe at an institution as synonymous with socialite summers as racing at Ascot and tennis at Wimbledon, Glyndebourne has all but buried its past in the expectation of a glorious future.

Financed entirely by private donations from members and companies, the £33 million (\$50 million) horseshoe-shaped auditorium has been built in a record 18 months and with the loss of only one three-month summer season.

"It is the product of British endeavour at its best and as such is something to be proud of," said Glyndebourne Chairman Sir George Christie, who still lives "over the shop" in the house where his parents started the festival in 1934 as an entertainment for friends.

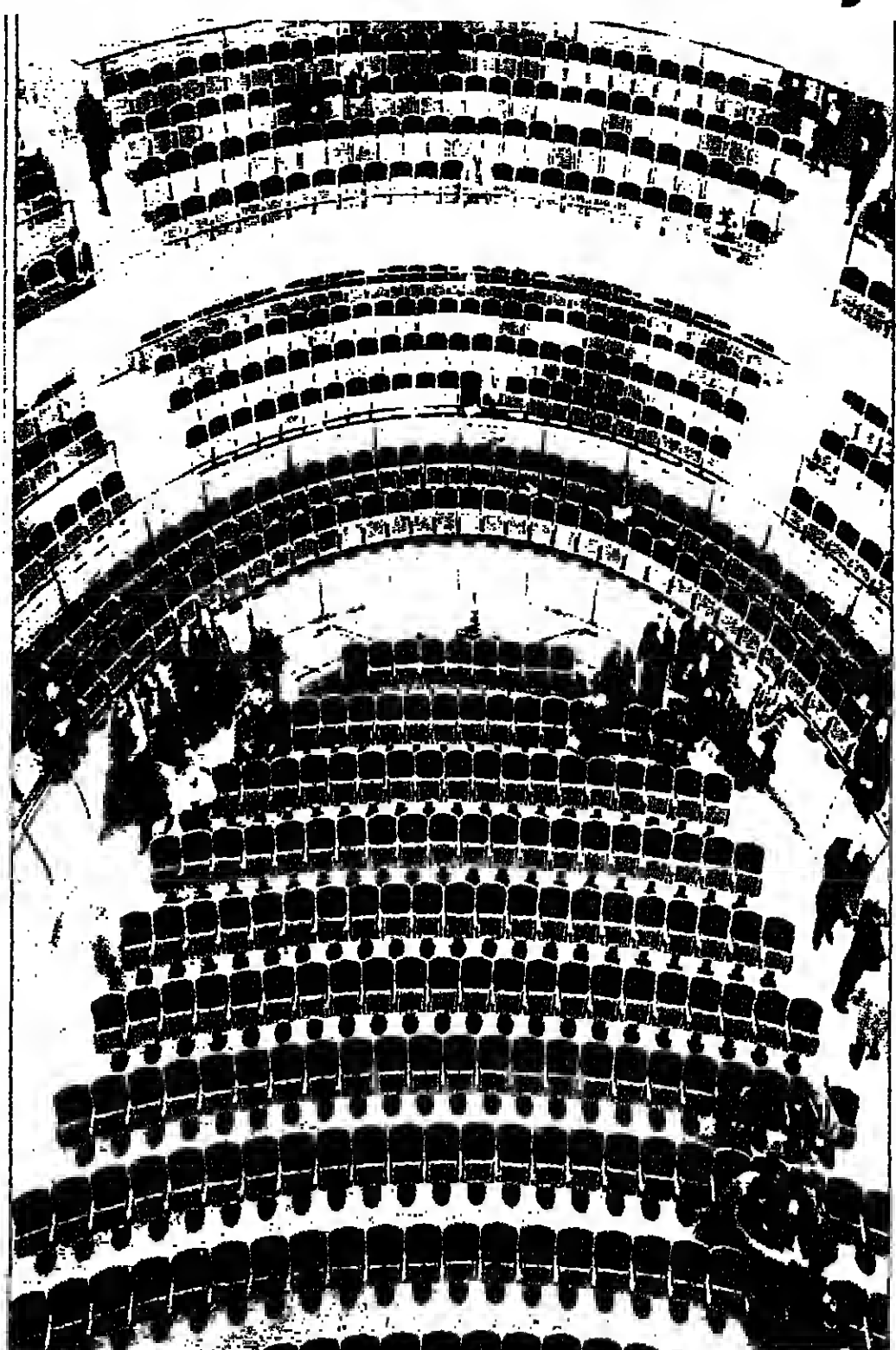
"Whether the new set-up works or not remains to be seen... we have been at pains to create a building here which has true sympathy with its surroundings," Sir George said.

Where the old Glyndebourne was a place of nooks and crannies, the new theatre is light and spacious.

The red plush, chandeliers and gilt usually associated with opera houses make way for pitched pine, rough brick and Scandinavian-style seating.

The new building has already divided critics even before the grand reopening night on May 28 for a production of *The Marriage of Figaro* conducted by Bernard Haitink.

The times critic called it



The new horseshoe-shaped auditorium at Glyndebourne can seat 1,200 people

"not just a triumph but a great masterpiece". Another journalist, less impressed, likened it to an industrial warehouse.

All-important acoustics tests start in March but the allure of Glyndebourne was never just about music.

An elite club requiring a £10,000 (\$15,050) membership fee and with 6,500 names on the waiting list, its attractions were enjoyed by a select few who donned bow-ties and dinner jackets and dipped into hampers of champagne and smoked salmon during the 75-minute

long interval.

But all that could now change too.

The only British opera house with its own helicopter landing pad has trebled the number of cheaper priced tickets available. For the first time in its 60-year history it is also offering 42 standing places at night at the rock-bottom price of £10 (\$15).

Sir George has decided to use the increased capacity from 800 to 1,200 seats to move down-market in price structure.

The two top-priced cate-

gories will take up only 64 per cent of capacity rather than 88 per cent in the old, demolished theatre.

"This must be a move undeniably in a direction with which no person sound in mind could reasonably quarrel," he said. "Could we please knock on the head the myth that Glyndebourne is a corporate club."

Guardian writer Martin Kettle called the new building "an extremely brave, un-English piece of risk-taking. Like it or not, the old Glyndebourne is dead, never to return."

By Mimi Mann
The Associated Press

TABA, Egypt — Hotchpotch Neil Mathieson never pictured himself as much of an adventurer and certainly not a savior of human history.

But for the last four years his wanderings through the northern Sinai wilderness have brought him face to face with what may be the peninsula's most endangered antiquity — ancient rock art.

The mysterious paintings — petroglyphs — are haunting reminders of his and history along the major caravan route linking Africa and Asia. Mathieson's dream is to save for future generations the silent picture parade through the wasteland where Moses wandered.

"The best way to save the pictures is to put them where tourists can see them but where they are protected," said Mathieson, general manager of the luxury Tabat El-Hon at Egypt's northeastern border with Israel.

Once isolated and out of sight, the rock art today is under siege by adventure travellers scouring Sinai with backpacks, recreational vehicles and belching cabs.

"My horror is people careening through the desert in four-wheel drive vehicles, destroying everything in their path," said Mathieson.

He's working with government officials to place the most important artwork in guarded nature reserves.

Land of silent pictures under siege

Tabat, Egypt already has 13 protected zones, four in the starkly beautiful Sinai.

"It's not just the pictures that are incredible but also their surroundings," said Canadian marine biologist Michael Pearson, an environmental consultant for protected areas.

Ancient wanderers drew the stark, sticklike figures on rock surfaces along traditional caravan routes and deep inside the lonely Sinai hills.

Drawings range from simple hunters and grazing animals to farmers, camel riders and furious battle scenes. There are Greek graffiti and messages from Roman legions, early Christian crosses and Islamic scriptures.

Some paintings are thousands of years old, others new.

Mathieson knew nothing of rock art and little of the desert when he came to Tabat in 1989 after Israel returned the border strip to Egypt. He grew up amid green and rolling English hillsides, a world away from the desolate Sinai.

"The only thing I knew about the desert I'd heard from my father, who fought at El Alamein," said Mathieson. "He once told me a man needs eight gallons of water a day to survive in the desert. Then I thought he was crazy. Now I understand."

But Mathieson soon became an avid trekker in nearby Sinai mountains and wadis, dry river beds where he chanced upon two ancient caravan routes with ghostly reminders of Sinai's past.

Here, over millennia, rock artists huddled in the shade of boulders to escape a searing sun and whiled away the time by drawing on the soft sandstone rocks. Some ancient travellers drew on barren rock surfaces; others on top of or around pictures their predecessors had drawn.

The first artists probably were nomads from the Negev, joined by wanderers from Jordan and Saudi Arabia. They left similar pictures wherever they roamed, a panorama of the region's history. Some pictures were crudely scratched, others roughly hammered out, others carefully incised.

Until recently, the ancient dwellings were off Sinai's beaten track. Tourists preferred Red Sea coral reefs or the Monastery of St. Catherine, with Mount Moses to climb and the legendary burning bush.

But with adventure travel booming in today's Sinai —

with few restrictions and fewer enforcers — Mathieson is convinced that many paintings could be doomed.

Visitors already have spirited valuable artifacts from remote antiquity sites. Divers and snorkelers have killed masses of coral by hacking pieces to take home.

Israeli archaeologists realised the art's importance during the Jewish state's 1967-82 occupation of Sinai. They even labelled some rock art to enlighten tourists.

Eliezer Oren, of Israel's Ben Gurion University, headed Sinai archaeological missions for 25 years. He recognises rock art's tourism potential but wants it saved equally for science and the many unanswered questions.

"The traditional idea is that the petroglyphs are associated with caravan routes," Oren said. "But in reality they're found all over the region where there is desert and rocky surfaces, even in the most remote areas."

A major problem is how to date rock paintings. Some occasionally are datable by scenes or language, but Oren said setting precise dates generally is a mine field for scientists.

He's also wary of experts who say there's a pattern to the paintings. "I've watched modern bedouins stop what they're doing and crawl into the shade. They draw on whatever rocks are handy," he said. "I'm sure ancient artists did the same."

British character acting — the feast goes on

By Matt Wolf
The Associated Press

LONDON — It's David Suchet as TV's Hercule Poirot, and again as a violent American university professor. Or Miriam Margulies stealing film time as a Manhattan matron in *The Age of Innocence* or on stage as the vain Lady Hardcastle in *She Stoops To Conquer*.

While Daniel Day-Lewis, Jeremy Irons, Emma Thompson and Anthony Hopkins reap Oscars and Academy Awards, the next tier of talent reveals England's true acting glories — the endless array of versatile performers who thrillingly swell Britain's acting ranks.

"It's like a great, inexhaustible treasure chest," says Producer Ismail Merchant, referring to the talent he has drawn upon in three decades of movies, including this year's *Remains Of The Day*.

The key, according to those who work in the British theatre, is that so-called character actors are not considered a lower form of life than the stars.

While *Remains Of The Day* has won praise for stars Hopkins and Thompson, its texture comes from a depth of talent — Peter Vaughan as Hopkins' father, an aging butler holding on to his dignity even as he loses his health; James Fox as the deluded lord of the manor; and Tim Pigott-Smith as the well-intentioned but wrong husband for Thompson's Miss Kenton.

A comparable depth shores up Martin Scorsese's *The Age Of Innocence*. While the erotic heat comes from leads Day-Lewis and Michelle Pfeiffer, Britons Alec McCowen, Michael Gough, Jonathan Pryce and Margulies flesh out the foreshadowing social codes of a vanished New York.

Richard Attenborough's *Shadowlands* has won line, early reviews not just for stars Hopkins and Debra Winger, but for such stalwart secondary players as John Wood, Edward Hardwicke and Michael Denison.

If film offers these actors their widest public, the British



David Suchet (standing) as TV's Hercule Poirot

ish theatre is where they most often strut their stuff.

Richard Eyre, artistic director of the Royal National Theatre, told the Associated Press in an interview that such talent was due to "the nature of the culture of theatre in this country."

"It doesn't operate on a star system," said Eyre, whose finest National Theatre stagings — David Hare's *Racing Demons*, Tennessee Williams' *Night Of The Iguana* — have been ensemble pieces, not star vehicles.

He cited British names such as Maggie Smith, Vanessa Redgrave and Ian McKellen as performers "created and nurtured" by the same repertory system which has launched generations of first-rank but lesser-known talent.

Sir Peter Hall, the English director of four current West End shows in-

cluding Margulies' *She Stoops To Conquer*, pointed out that Britain is easier on its character actors than the United States has been.

"We allow character actors like Miriam some respect," said Hall, 63. "Whereas in America, if you're not a star, you're not anybody."

Hall lauded Britain's ability to field character actors "in their 40s and 50s — real craftsmen — who have the confidence of their craft and know who they are."

In the United States, by contrast, "most character actors have been slung down the bottom of the heap if they haven't made it as a star," he said.

The likability factor, Hall added, was key. In Britain, "acting is about not being afraid of putting yourself on the line. In America, you have to be liked."

It's also about projecting

a persona in the United States and submerging that persona in England. While Clint Eastwood, Jack Nicholson and the like play variations on themselves, British stars such as Day-Lewis, Boh Hoskins and Miranda Richardson are chameleons.

"Daniel is a character actor deeply uncomfortable with the idea of being a star," Richard Eyre said of Day-Lewis whom he last directed on stage as an unusually impetuous Hamlet.

To that end, the Oscar-winning star of *My Left Foot* thinks nothing about conjoining himself to play the afflicted Christy Moore or, conversely, pumping himself up for *The Last Of The Mohicans* or growing into emotionally ossified old age in *The Age Of Innocence*.

For some performers, acting and character acting are synonymous.

"As far as I'm concerned, it's really the only way to act," said Suchet, 47, who has been electrifying the West End for the last six months as the American professor who turns abusive in *Oleanna*.

Suchet said he had never been an advocate of the personality-star system.

"Obviously, there's a desire for it, but that is created by the public who need to hero worship. It's not actually a way for any actor to proceed," said Suchet, a familiar face on American TV as the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, as Sigmund Freud, and as Joseph Conrad's secret agent, among many other roles.

How do actors know they are character actors?

Miriam Margulies laughs. "I knew when I was born; I've always known it, and I glory in the title," she said.

"I don't actually know what other kind of actress there is," said the small, round actress, aware that character acting prolongs a performer's worth even as once-youthful stars are put out to pasture with age.

"The screen likes youth, but luckily it seems also to like age. I'm 52, and I'm having a better time than I've ever had."

Guitarist Peter Frampton comes alive — one more time

By Dean Goodman
Reuters

LOS ANGELES — The 1970s are alive and well: Just ask any bell-bottom-wearing, Wayne's World devotee at a sold-out meat loaf or Aerosmith concert.

These two musical acts are enjoying huge popularity after making comebacks that no one ever thought possible, such was the sorry state of their commercial and personal lives. Now another '70s high-flier who fell to earth with a thud is staking a claim for fans' hearts and wallets.

Peter Frampton, the English guitarist who hit paydirt in 1976 with the multimillion-selling *Frampton Comes Alive* album, has just released his first album in five years and is undertaking a heavy promotion schedule.

Simply titled *Peter Frampton* (Relativity Records), the album is his 13th solo effort in a career that stretches to 1966. The first single, *Day In The Sun*, entered the album rock charts at number 20, which bodes well for the album. However Frampton hopes for something a little more elusive.

"Each time I've done a

project I've had great hopes for it, great dreams for it," the genial 43-year-old told Reuters in a recent interview at his north Hollywood recording studio.

"I had everything in the palm of my hand, and then gradually it sort of slipped away. It's not the money, it's just the respect for being an artist."

During the mid-1970s when he was basking in the acclaim that comes with having one of the biggest albums of all time, Frampton found that he was becoming a magazine cover boy first and a musician second.

"It got to the point," he said, "where I got out of one concert, and this girl came up to me and said, 'wow I didn't know you played guitar. Who played guitar on Frampton Comes Alive then?'"

Frampton's career is an interesting study in misconceptions and opportunities lost. At 16 he joined the Herd, a successful British teenybopper act, as lead guitarist and eventually lead singer. Then in 1969 he formed Humble Pie with his hero Steve Marriott, late of the Small Faces. He left in 1971 after the good-time

boogie band scored a gold record with *Performance: Rockin' The Fillmore*.

His solo career, which was based on non-stop touring, started to seem a bad move when his first few albums sold only moderately. Frampton Comes Alive was a desperate marketing ploy but it struck a chord and has now sold more than 15 million copies. It still sells about 1,000 copies a week.

Subsequent albums, released amid a drugs/alcohol/personal tragedy fog, obeyed the law of diminishing returns, and acts like *Journey*, *Heart* and *Foreigner* replaced Frampton at the vanguard of album-oriented radio.

Frampton briefly re-emerged in the public consciousness as lead guitarist on school chum David Bowie's ill-fated 1987 *Glass Spider* world tour. But generally the only place Frampton existed was on classic rock radio.

That was until 1992 when Frampton hit the road for a change of environment after Marriott's accidental death in a fire the year before. The two had reunited and started writing songs together.

The "Fun" eight-week

tour of clubs evolved into a seven-month criss-crossing of America that took in a few amphitheatres. He didn't even have an album to promote.

"The ones I expected were there, like 25 to my age.... But there were like 15, 16, 17-year-olds there. These are the same people that listen to snoop doggy dogg as well," he says.

In his new album, Frampton confronts his shattered dreams, self-doubts and frustrations. He even aims a few barbs at Marriott, whose refusal to get his act together frustrated Frampton.

On *Out Of The Blue*, Frampton constructs a duet by sampling Marriott's vocals from a four-track demo. ("It was eerie, very eerie," he says).

But the album's overall tone is upbeat, and Frampton has not lost his knack for a catchy chorus or guitar riff.

"If you have good songs and you have a good chance on the radio, I think there will be a whole new generation that will pick up on it," Frampton says. "You can call something grunge or call it rap or whatever, but if something's good it gets picked up on."

If film offers these actors their widest public, the Brit-

U.K. National Health Service suffers from reforms

By Robert Woodward
Reuters

LONDON — A British student in agony with a kidney infection is forced to wait 23 hours for hospital treatment. An 87-year-old with a brain cancer sits for five-and-a-half hours on a chair while nurses search desperately for a spare bed.

The conservative government denies it. But doctors, nurses and patients believe Britain's National Health Service (NHS), once a model for health care in countries all over the world, is on the critical list after radical surgery by ministers.

A major embarrassment in its life is to meet overseas doctors and be asked why we are ruining one of the world's best and most

cost-effective health services. Professor John Ward, a consultant physician, wrote in the Guardian newspaper.

Five years ago this month the ruling Conservatives put forward proposals to open up the NHS, established in 1946 by a Labour government, to market forces.

Under the reforms, the roles of purchaser — local and regional health authorities — and provider — mainly hospitals — have been separated. "The market" is now meant to ensure a cheaper service more responsive to the needs of patients.

Whether the reforms will achieve their long-term purpose is open to question. But what is not in doubt is that they have so far caused

confusion, anger and widespread problems.

"They (the reforms) are not working because now it is all to do with economics and little to do with the quality of health care," said a paediatric surgeon, who did not want to be named.

"There has not been enough thought behind it," said one purchaser for a London local authority. "Is it (the reform plan) there to save money or improve health? I think it's a mess."

Health Minister Virginia Bottomley claims the number of people on hospital waiting lists has fallen since the reforms, the number of patients treated has risen sharply and spending on the NHS has never been higher.

The government hopes patients with less serious illnesses will be treated "in the community" by doctors. Spending is being taken away from cities and spread more evenly in the country.

Hospital staff in large cities say community-based services do not yet exist to plug the gap and lack of funds is forcing them to close whole hospital wards. Doctors say they spend far too much time trying to find hospital beds for sick patients.

Patients routinely wait for two years for an operation and the opposition Labour Party says some can wait more than four years for orthopaedic surgery. Some surgeons have been instructed to stop operations because there is no

money left to pay for them.

Labour says health's share of government spending is now as low as in the mid-1970s. It accuses the government of creating a medical "class" system whereby the rich pay for private care and the poor fight for the scraps of an under-funded public system.

"The government have created chaos in the world's greatest health service," Labour health spokesman David Blunkett told parliament. "The government have deliberately created two-tier access to services. Their record is a disgrace."

Problems in London are worsened by a controversial plan to merge or close huge, century-old hospitals in the centre of the capital, which are sometimes just streets away from each other, and

make more money available for use in non-city areas.

The Royal College of Nursing revealed this month that 50 per cent of patients attending London emergency departments have to wait overnight for a bed.

Media reports have highlighted cases of seriously ill patients being kept on trolleys in drafty corridors because there were not enough hospital beds in London. Government figures show more than a third of NHS hospital beds have been closed since the Conservatives took office in 1979.

Student Nadene Ghouri made front-page headlines when she revealed that she was forced to wait 23 hours for a bed after going to a hospital suffering from a serious kidney infection.

To add insult to injury, Ghouri claimed a hospital manager tried to persuade her to "go private" and receive immediate treatment as she lay in agony. "This is not Mogadishu, or Addis Ababa, or Sarajevo," raged the London Evening Standard.

"It is London, in which this government apparently does not consider it a political priority to maintain standards of simple human decency for its sick citizens."

Londoners have great affection for the hospitals, often sprawling, decrepit Victorian buildings. Hospital staff fear specialist services, built upon more than 100 years of expertise, will be diluted or lost after the amalgamations.

Demoralised nurses are sick and tired of the confusion

and their working conditions. "Most people are struggling to maintain minimum standards — if they want to make cuts, the first place they look at is the nurses," one nurse said.

"Patients get an adequate amount of care but not what they deserve. It makes morale terrible," she added.

Such anger is fuelled by the increase in managers who earn salaries far above those of doctors and nurses. Spending on managers' pay in London has increased 109 per cent in the past four years while the bill for nurses and midwives fell 23 per cent.

"A lot of these managers are not medically qualified," said the paediatrician. "They would not know quality of service if they saw it."

Low response to alcohol 'may boost risk of later alcoholism'

By Malcolm Ritter
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Young men who showed little effect from the equivalent of rapidly drinking three or five beers were much more likely to become alcoholics than men who felt very drunk, a study found.

The effect appeared not only among offspring of alcoholics, who are at increased risk of alcoholism, but also in other men.

The finding may help prevent alcoholism by persuading children of alcoholics to become abstainers if they can drink others under the table, said study author Dr. Marc Schuckit.

"At the least, he said, it should warn them that if they drink until they feel like stopping, it may be too much."

The finding carries the same message for people who are not children of

alcoholics, although the relative insensitivity to alcohol appears to be less common in them, he said.

The work is reported in the February issue of the American journal of psychiatry. Schuckit is a psychiatry professor at the University of California, San Diego, Medical School and director of the Alcohol Research Centre of the San Diego Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

A relative insensitivity to alcohol may be one inherited trait that puts children of alcoholics at heightened risk of alcoholism, he said.

His study related the alcohol response of 223 men, who were around age 20 when tested, to their risk of alcoholism by the time they were recontacted an average of 9.3 years later.

The testing used two alcohol doses that produced the same blood alcohol concentrations as drinking ab-

out three and five beers within 10 minutes. The larger dose would get somebody legally drunk in most states, Dr. Schuckit said.

The men's response was assessed with some biological markers and two indicators used in the new analysis: Body swaying and a questionnaire that asked men how much they felt high, intoxicated, sleepy, floating, nauseous and other sensations.

By the time of the follow-up, 42 of the 124 men with alcoholic fathers and 13 of the 98 other men had become alcoholics. Men with alcoholic mothers had been excluded from the study.

The 20 per cent of men who had shown the least reaction to alcohol had a 43 per cent rate of alcoholism, versus 11 per cent for the one-fifth of the men showing the greatest reaction.

Among the men with alcoholic fathers, the rates

were 56 per cent versus 14 per cent, and among the other men, the rates were 24 per cent versus 9 per cent.

Dr. Schuckit said men who are relatively resistant to the effects of alcohol may drink more to feel its effects, and then progressively more as their bodies build up tolerance. So they may be more likely to reach intakes that put them at high risk for alcoholism, he said.

Dr. Schuckit said he had excluded women because of concern that they might have different risk factors for alcoholism. But other smaller studies suggest a similar effect in women, he said.

Dr. Donald Goodwin, a psychiatry professor and alcoholism researcher at the University of Kansas, said Dr. Schuckit's findings made sense.

Study: Too much dietary iron may cause cancer in men

By Luran Neergaard
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Even a little too much iron in men's diets could increase their risk of cancer, a new study suggests.

Iron is an essential nutrient found mainly in red meat and grains fortified with vitamins and supplements. Too little can cause medical problems, from anemia to retardation. But the new research indicates that supplementing diets with iron, whether in pills or fortified foods, may not be in everyone's best interest either.

The largest study of date, published in the International Journal of Cancer, shows a risk of cancer in men beginning to rise when the amount of iron in their bodies is 10 per cent higher than average.

"There is such a thing as too much of a good thing," said study author Dr. Marc Micozzi, director of the

National Museum of Health and Medicine in Washington.

The study was published alongside one from Finland that found the same phenomenon there. Smaller studies have had similar findings, raising the question of whether American public health policy, with its emphasis on fortified foods and vitamins, should be re-examined.

"Iron fortification was instituted with a lot of good intentions but maybe not with complete information," said Dr. Katherine McGlynn, an iron expert at the Fox Chase Cancer Centre in Philadelphia. However, she said more studies are needed "that really put the coffin down to say we've got to stop supplementing."

It's much too early to say supplements should be stopped, said Abe Parvanta, a nutritionist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"Whether high intakes of iron over a lifetime can potentially affect health, the research is not definitive," he said.

Iron deficiency is mainly a problem of the poor and malnourished. It has been known that high iron overloads can be dangerous, too.

Now comes the research indicating slightly high levels of iron may be bad, too. Last year researchers said it may increase heart disease, and the recent study found risks for a variety of cancers, from colon to liver.

Dr. Richard Stevens of Pacific Northwest Laboratory started it all with a 1988 study of 14,000 healthy Americans that found men with high iron levels were 37 per cent more likely to develop cancer than those with low levels.

Differences weren't statistically significant in women, who lost iron through menstruation. The

only way to shed excess iron is to bleed; people with high levels are encouraged to donate blood.

Dr. Stevens and Dr. Micozzi re-examined the same people to find where the risk began. They discovered a typical American has enough iron to fill up 30 per cent of the protein that carries the metal to his red blood cells. But risk for cancer began increasing when that protein was 40 per cent full, the study said.

It's a disturbing finding "for aging men like me" because iron accumulates over time, Dr. Stevens said.

The data shouldn't be surprising, Dr. Micozzi said, because iron is an oxidant — it causes molecular reactions with oxygen that damage the body's cells.

Scientists are excited about antioxidants vitamins such as C and E that may repair such cell damage — but few have studied the oxidants themselves, he said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

ADDED MEANINGS

By Norma Steinberg

ACROSS
1 Endure
2 Bags
3 Baseball, e.g.
4 The Gorbals
5 Actor
6 Cloning
7 "I am a girl, just like you"
8 Oil sound
9 Yes (interjection)
10 Pledge
11 An Orson
12 Of sight
13 Told apart
14 Spread out
15 Correspondence
16 Her
17 Before, past
18 — and hours
19 Take that!

DOWN
1 Dear
2 Minor
3 Betray
4 Range
5 Simple
6 Amiable
7 Chick con
8 Make a swat
9 Pack
10 Gem
11 Where's...?
12 (Gordon) move
13 Handy
14 Translucent
15 Pumping abbr.
16 Food for TV
17 Abusive words
18 Nasty + soul
19 Words

34 School paper
35 Bander Malone
36 Baseball
37 One long
38 Cloning
39 "I am a girl, just like you"
40 Oil sound
41 Yes (interjection)
42 Pledge
43 An Orson
44 Of sight
45 Told apart
46 Spread out
47 Correspondence
48 Her
49 Before, past
50 — and hours
51 Take that!

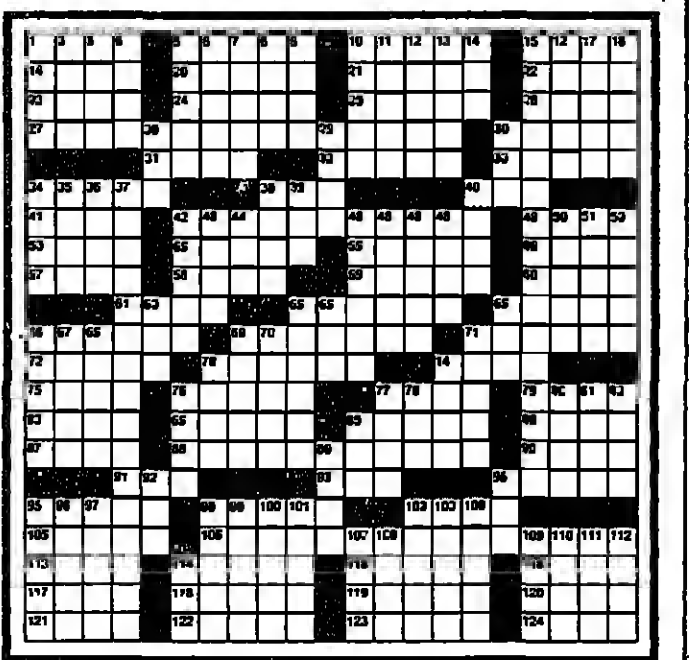
52 School paper
53 Bander Malone
54 Baseball
55 One long
56 Cloning
57 "I am a girl, just like you"
58 Oil sound
59 Yes (interjection)
60 Pledge
61 An Orson
62 Of sight
63 Told apart
64 Spread out
65 Correspondence
66 Her
67 Before, past
68 — and hours
69 Take that!

70 School paper
71 Bander Malone
72 Baseball
73 One long
74 Cloning
75 "I am a girl, just like you"
76 Oil sound
77 Yes (interjection)
78 Pledge
79 An Orson
80 Of sight
81 Told apart
82 Spread out
83 Correspondence
84 Her
85 Before, past
86 — and hours
87 Take that!

69 Submerge
70 Trenches
71 Tutor, Brit
72 Express
73 Get up
74 Of the
75 The congregation
76 Meera or
77 Banquet
78 Eucalyptus
79 One of the
80 Put on stall
81 Taw from the top
82 Fragrant
83 Duck at
84 The War
85 Hero
86 Ogle
87 Bally to the
88 Driving man
89 Parade

90 Noshed
91 Tom Hanks move
92 Before
93 Cheery
94 Breast pocket
95 On to
96 Bert's co-puppet
97 Nuts
98 Healed
99 Mine Bernhardt
100 Fer
101 Clark's girlfriend
102 A Mar
103 The grass
104 No
105 Bransford
106 100
107 Part of BPOE
108 Army man
109 Pricer
110 Hersher

111 Liquid mess
112 Privileged
113 Reason
114 Poultry
115 Get up
116 Without
117 AKA
118 Equestrian
119 Murdered
120 Fud
121 Bulwark
122 Gorge
123 Case
124 Chorio
125 Glass
126 Measure of myth
127 Light
128 Advertising
129 Lets stand
130 Quack and
131 Ratner



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Basketball star dunks ball in for final score as cute cheerleader cheers her hero on.
2. Paramedic, promptly applying procedural manual, saved fragile accident victim from paralysis.
3. Jury in personal injury case was agreed upon not guilty verdict — very unusual nowadays.
4. Gray-green olive groves dot the rainy hillsides.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. SCAATICK EXAKU CAQIITS-ZXAZYQ CKI
VACKITUSQU CK WYI ITUSZCK CU
ACVVTEU CZZAWCP SQA ACITUS ZCEPS.

—By Rita Salvato

2. TLJYHAQTHLJ TABI ILACEJK LJ JBI
HWS DQNSQ MRSXJX BRBY BEJR
DBLDS LJ YEXBIWSC MBSLI.

—By Earl Ireland

3. RIFBN LIJARKIG LETTO MG LIPDG, LER
SMUR BADTIPS ED BARK PUN LEB
DRIIGD.

—By Ed Huddleson

4. THREE PLUSL PHISP ERDS LN PHE
"FMEEP HAV FSHUP TREE ORDS ONASK
YRIP SAV MY FUNDS."

—By Frank N. Stein

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

Rare virus 'can mask' important measure of AIDS infection

CHICAGO (AP) — A rare leukemia virus can mask an important measure of the severity of HIV infections and make those who have the virus get sick faster, a new study found.

The virus, called HTLV-I, is relatively rare in the United States. But it has a higher-than-average frequency in people who have HIV, and especially in drug users who share needles, researchers said.

The researchers studied 27 men and women who had both HIV — which causes AIDS — and HTLV-I infections in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They compared them with 99 similar men and women who had

HIV infections but not HTLV-I.

The researchers found that people with both infections tended to have more white blood cells, called CD4 cells, than people with HIV alone. Lower CD4 counts have always been associated with worse HIV infections.

But the dual-infected people had more severe symptoms, said the researchers, led by Dr. Mario Schechter of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro.

They reported their findings in the latest issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Stanley H. Weiss, director of infectious diseases epidemiology in the Department of Preventive Medicine at New York Medical School in Newark, said the study is important.

"This report suggests the use of CD4 counts in persons co-infected with HIV and HTLV-I... may be more complicated than in persons with HIV alone," he said.

It could be misleading for doctors to use CD4 counts to gauge the severity of HIV infections, he said, even though the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines AIDS by it.

The CDC says anyone whose CD4 count falls below 200 cells per cubic millimetre of blood can be classified as having AIDS.

People infected only with HTLV-I have a 1 per cent chance of developing a blood cancer called adult T-cell leukemia, which often kills quickly. The virus is a major cause of leukemia in southern Japan and the Caribbean, where the virus is much more prevalent than in the United States.

HTLV-I also is linked to a potentially fatal, degenerative nerve disease that causes spasticity and paralysis of the legs.

'ORS can save 3 million lives annually'

DHAKA (AFP) — Oral rehydration solution (ORS), a simple and cheap treatment used by millions of diarrhoeal patients worldwide, has the potential to save up to three million lives annually, an expert here said.

"It (ORS) is a people-friendly technology" that saves over a million lives each year from life-threatening diarrhoeal diseases, Demissie Habte, chief of the Dhaka-based International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) told a ORS conference here.

The ICDDR,B is a successor to Dhaka's foreign-aided Cholera Research

Laboratory where researchers in 1968 first completed clinical trials of ORS for treatment of tens of thousands of victims of cholera and diarrhoea in this part of the world.

Dr. Habte said in the United States, 200,000 children, hospitalised with diarrhoeal diseases each year, were treated with expensive intravenous daps. He said effective use of ORS could not only reduce their sufferings, but also save \$400 million annually.

There are still two-to-three million children dying of diarrhoeal diseases in the world due to the failure of mothers to use ORS effectively and at right time, Dr. Habte said.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who opened the conference to celebrate ORS's 25th anniversary, termed discovery of ORS as a remarkable advancement in the field of medicine.

ORS was playing a vital role against diarrhoea, one of the principal causes of

infant mortality in Third World countries, including Bangladesh, she said and hoped the local and foreign researchers at the ICDDR,B would continue their search for newer technologies on ORS for the benefit of both developed and developing countries.

Solutions PERPLEXITIES

U.S.A.

- (1) New Hampshire. (he, men, warship).
- (2) Rhode Island. (Red, dash, lion).
- (3) Minnesota. (Son, at, mine).

Plots bust

(Continued from page 1)

ives and how they could be controlled.

"These are part of a bigger (plan) of assassinations, explosions and... must be the doing of a group that seeks to destabilise the regime and influence its political decision," said Deputy Abdul Rauf Rawabdeh.

The Kingdom must resist such pressures on the country, which refuses to make concessions on Arab rights in the peace process through which it seeks to attain just and lasting peace, he said.

Mr. Hammad said investigations into the explosions were continuing and details will be announced when they are finished.

Responding to Mr. Hammad's statement that the arrested groups planned to rob banks because they are "usurious," Islamic Action Deputy Abdullah Akaleh said Islamic thought "is innocent from any action that is not predicated on wise treatment."

"The statement has special implications," he said, adding that Islam does not call for dealing with usury by "such shameful acts."

Bomb scare

(Continued from page 1)

houses and reports of at least one bomb being removed from a liquor store, Wednesday's incident jolted Amman residents.

They had woken up to read in Arabic dailies a vivid account of the Feb. 2 explosion at Zarga's Salwa theatre by none other than a suspect who confessed to having planted the crude, homemade device, which seriously injured himself and another man, an Egyptian.

The earlier explosion, at Amman's Rivoli theatre on Jan. 26, injured seven. Both movie theatres were screening soft-porn movies.

Eid Saleh Jahaleen, 31, who lost his legs in the Zarga explosion, was quoted as saying in interviews with the Arabic papers from his hospital bed that he was not a member of any group but was persuaded by Mohammed Ali Shehadeh, who is also under detention, to plant the device in the movie house.

Mr. Jahaleen, a plumber and father of three, said Mr. Shehadeh, a building materials merchant, used to address Koranic meetings in the Baqaa Palestinian refugee camp and had visited Afghanistan more than once.

He said Mr. Shehadeh had also indicated to him that he was somehow responsible for the blast at the Rivoli. The planting of the explosive device at the Rivoli was "easy," he quoted Mr. Shehadeh as saying.

"I was told that (the planting of the bomb) would be an act of welfare... since there are so many bad things in this country," Mr. Jahaleen was quoted as saying in the interview.

Mr. Jahaleen's account of the explosion, as derived from the interview, went as follows: In his profession as plumber, which used to earn him JD 12 a day, he was in contact with Mr. Shehadeh, who used to sell plumbing material. Mr. Shehadeh boasted that "he knew better" than most, and used to talk about "decadence in the society and the need to address such things as cinemas showing pornographic movies and women having to queue (subsidised) food coupons." (There was no explanation to the purported link between the coupon distribution and planting a bomb at a movie house).

Mr. Jahaleen was told by Mr. Shehadeh to scout the Zarga theatre a few days before the actual explosion was planned. He reported back to the merchant the planting of the bomb did not pose a problem.

Subsequently, Mr. Shehadeh gave him the explosive device and told him how to plant it in the timer.

Mr. Jahaleen went to the theatre and watched a movie that started at 11 a.m. During the course of the movie, he switched places and fixed the timer to the device and shoved it under a seat.

Mr. Jahaleen "forgot all about the bomb" and continued to watch the movie. But the bomb exploded 45 minutes earlier than timed. "The next thing I knew, I woke up in hospital... and then I realised that I had lost my legs."

By his own admission, Mr. Jahaleen is not a devout Muslim and does not strictly follow Islamic teachings; nor does he insist on his wife wearing an Islamic veil.

"I have dirtied my hand with such an evil crime," he was quoted as saying. "I regret it now."

Justice on trial: Kuwait three years after liberation

Amnesty International Report

THREE YEARS ago this month, at the end of the Gulf war, Iraqi forces withdrew from Kuwait. This event is usually referred to as the liberation of Kuwait. For many people in Kuwait this period was not the beginning of freedom, but the end.

While many governments — including those whose troops had taken part in the Gulf war to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait — urged the Kuwaiti government to respect freedom and democracy now that the country's sovereignty had been restored, hundreds of Palestinians, Jordanians, Iraqis, members of the *bidun* community and others were being arbitrarily arrested as the Kuwaiti armed forces, police and armed civilians rounded up those they suspected of "collaborating" with Iraqi forces during the occupation. Many of them had lived and worked in Kuwait for generations and were arrested solely on the basis of their nationality or origin, in retaliation for the position taken by their governments or leaders on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Scores of those arrested died in detention after being tortured. Others were killed, or "disappeared" in custody and are still unaccounted for. Many were held in secret detention centres for months, detained without charge or trial. Three years on, some are still awaiting trial, while an estimated 400 remain held in Talha Deportation Centre.

Those who do get to court face trials which do not meet international standards for fair trial, yet which have resulted in death sentences or long prison terms. One man has already been executed and 19 prisoners are now facing the death penalty. Over 140 people, including prisoners of conscience, are serving sentences of up to life imprisonment.

What has been done in Kuwait during the past three years to investigate these human rights violations and to bring their perpetrators to justice? The Kuwaiti government's silence speaks for itself.

Detainees who were brought to trial within the first few months after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait was ended, found themselves facing a martial law court on charges of

"collaboration" with the occupation forces. An AI delegate who attended a number of sessions before the court concluded that "...the trials were defective in all the critical phases — in the pre-trial period, during the hearings themselves and afterwards in the lack of defendants' right to appeal to a higher tribunal. In some cases, defendants were never told what charges they faced." Over a one-month period, between 19 May and 20 June 1991, 164 defendants were tried, 42 of them in absentia.

AI called for the trials to be halted immediately until they were brought in line with international standards, but the Kuwaiti government did not respond. The trials continued. Twenty-nine defendants were sentenced to death while 72 others received custodial sentences ranging between one year and life; 45 other defendants were acquitted. Some of the defendants were convicted solely on the basis of "confessions" extracted under torture; others on the basis of hearsay testimony from secret witnesses — in some cases after having been denied access to a

defence lawyer until the start of the trial.

None had the right to appeal. The fate of those convicted was left in the hands of Crown Prince Sheikh Sa'ad Al Abdallah Al Sabah who, in his capacity as martial law governor, was empowered to reduce, confirm or even increase the sentences. AI believes that mounting international pressure on Kuwait during this period led to the commutation of the 29 death sentences, a step which AI welcomed. The crown prince also reduced a number of custodial sentences.

Nevertheless, at least 59 prisoners convicted by the martial law courts are currently serving terms of imprisonment in Kuwait Central Prison following manifestly unfair trials. Some of them are prisoners of conscience. AI has consistently called for a judicial review of all these cases to be set up. The Kuwaiti government has refused to do so.

Balqis Hafez Fadhi, a 29-year-old Iraqi, used to work for a television company that produced cultural programmes, based in Kuwait but involving all Gulf countries. She is now serving a 10-year prison sentence for "collaboration" with the Iraqi authorities. She

was charged in connection with the much publicised *Al Nida* newspaper case, the only newspaper which the Iraqi authorities allowed to be published during the occupation. Along with 14 others, she was convicted before a martial law court in 1991. She denied all charges in court. Six of the defendants — including one woman — received death sentences which were later commuted to life imprisonment.

Defendants held on "collaboration" charges who had not been tried when martial law was lifted at the end of June 1991 remained in detention until April 1992 when the trials resumed, this time before the State Security Court. In the interim period Kuwait's State Security Law was amended, giving the defendants certain limited rights denied them at all stages of the proceedings. Among the victims were young boys and men over 70 years of age, the majority of them Palestinians, Jordanians, Iraqis, and Sudanese. Other victims included members of the *bidun* community: stateless Arabs, many of whom were born in Kuwait and have lived and worked there for years, but who continue to be denied the most basic civil and political rights.

In some cases the victims were rushed to hospitals for emergency treatment, where tight security controls were enforced and treatment was generally administered by Kuwaiti doctors. Despite the difficulties in gaining access to such victims, AI did obtain hospital records on some cases. These, together with testimonies from non-Kuwaiti doctors, indicated that during the period of martial law there was a high incidence of "patients" being admitted to hospitals suffering from kidney failure resulting from "crush syndrome" — a condition frequently associated with traumatic damage to muscle tissue, such as would result from severe beatings.

AI believes that in many cases the victims were picked up and tortured solely on the basis of their nationality or origin. Among the victims were three Kuwaitis standing trial. In July 1993, AI called for a re-trial. Among other things, the organisation was concerned about the violation of the defendants' rights during pre-trial detention, including being denied the basic right to have a lawyer defending them at all stages of the proceedings.

Among the victims were young boys and men over 70 years of age, the majority of them Palestinians, Jordanians, Iraqis, and Sudanese. Other victims included members of the *bidun* community: stateless Arabs, many of whom were born in Kuwait and have lived and worked there for years, but who continue to be denied the most basic civil and political rights.



A Kuwaiti soldier stands in front of prisoners being tried before a martial court in 1991 on "collaboration" charges (Popper foto)

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AI continued to receive reports of torture after martial law was lifted at the end of June 1991 but the incidence of such cases gradually decreased by the end of that year. In 1992 and 1993 there were new reports of torture unrelated to the Gulf conflict.

In June 1992, a Sri Lankan national, Colompage Asoka

Pathmakumara, died on the way to Al Farwaniya Hospital, apparently after being returned to Jlaib Al Shuyukh police station. He had been arrested in May after being accused of robbery, an accusation which his wife strongly denies. A death certificate issued by the Ministry of Public Health gave the cause of death as "bruises on the back and foot and fractures in the right thigh, internal haemorrhage and shock". In December 1992 the Justice Ministry told AI that the death of the Sri Lankan detainee was not unlawful and was the result of injuries sustained when he fell from a building while attempting to escape. The ministry conceded that he had been beaten "lightly" during interrogation to extract a confession, and said that seven policemen had been referred to the Criminal Court on torture charges. However, despite AI's repeated requests, the government has to date failed to provide details of legal proceedings being followed in the cases of the seven policemen implicated in the torture of Colompage Asoka Pathmakumara.

Hisham Ben Solh, an airline steward of Lebanese and Tunisian nationality, was reportedly tortured in July 1992 while held for over two weeks at Messila Civil Defence Centre. After his release he said he had been beaten repeatedly and burned with cigarettes while in custody, and denied access to British consular officials until the moment of his release.

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REGRETS that the Kuwaiti government has not seen fit to take any serious action on any of the concerns raised with it over the past three years. Even more regrettable is the fact that the government did not see fit to apply to the conduct of its own law enforcement officials those international human rights standards which it justifiably called for during the occupation of the country.

In May 1991, apparently as a result of continuing adverse international media publicity, Kuwait's crown prince himself publicly stated that residents of Kuwait were living "in the shadow of terror, fear and fright", and that some of them had been taken to police stations where they could be "tortured". He called on the Ministry of Interior to remove "disillusioned and had elements from its ranks". How this directive was to be implemented was never made clear, and AI believes that no serious efforts were made to do so.

The Kuwaiti government has failed: — to conduct any serious investigations into cases of arbitrary arrest, prolonged detention without trial, torture, deaths in custody, "disappearances" and extrajudicial killings. — to bring to justice any law enforcement officials responsible for these crimes, and despite its claims to AI that it has taken legal proceedings against some of them, it has to date provided no details or evidence of this.

— to compensate the victims of these human rights violations and their families. — to ensure that trial proceedings before the State Security Court conform to international fair trial standards. Defendants continue to be imprisoned for prolonged periods or sentenced to death after unfair trials.

— to set up a judicial review of the cases of prisoners convicted by martial law courts after manifestly unfair trials.

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Japan cuts growth targets

TOKYO (R) — Japanese economic planners edged closer to reality Wednesday, slashing growth forecasts for this business year to the lowest level in two decades and predicting modest growth in the year starting April 1.

But private economists think the official outlook, issued the day after Japan unveiled its biggest-ever economic stimulus package, is probably still too rosy.

A senior Economic Planning Agency (EPA) official told reporters the agency had cut its growth forecast for gross national product (GNP) in fiscal 1993/94 to March 31 from an earlier 3.3 per cent to a slim 0.2 per cent.

That would be the lowest growth since the economy reeled from the shock of higher oil prices in 1974/75.

The official said the growth target was being set at 2.6 per cent of GNP for fiscal 1994/95, which ends on March 31, 1995.

Gross domestic product (GDP) growth is expected to rise by just 2.4 per cent in the same period.

But the EPA forecasts remain above those by many private economists.

The agency official said this was because the government has taken into account all of a 15.25 trillion yen (\$141 billion) economic package unveiled Tuesday by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa's coalition.

The package included some six trillion yen (\$55.5 billion) in income and other tax cuts.

"Forecasts by private institutions were made before the latest economic package was announced. They had digested (long-planned) income tax cuts but not the public works spending or housing investment (which are other elements of the package)," the official said.

Private economists said be-

fore the package was announced that the economy, mired in one of its worst post-world war II recessions, could actually shrink this fiscal year, which growth in 1994/95 is likely to be a mere 0.5 per cent or so.

Some foreign economists have been more optimistic, but still only expect growth around 1.5 per cent. Peter Morgan, chief economist at Merrill Lynch Japan, said he trimmed his forecast from an original 1.6 per cent because tax cuts were smaller than expected.

Economists pointed out that government growth forecasts are targets to guide policy rather than forecasts of reality.

The agency admitted its huge current account and trade surpluses were set to be bigger than expected in 1993/94. It tried to soften this by releasing the forecast in yen rather than dollars.

It now expects a current account surplus of 14.4 trillion

yen (\$133 billion) in fiscal 1993/94 to end-March, compared with an earlier official forecast of 14.2 trillion yen (\$131 billion). It also sees a trade surplus of 15.4 trillion yen (\$142 billion) in 1993/94.

But the agency, in yen terms, expects the current account surplus to fall to 13.8 trillion yen (\$127 billion) in 1994/95 and the trade surplus to dip to 15 trillion yen (\$138 billion).

It was the first time the agency has issued the forecasts in yen only. Officials said they wanted to do that because exchange rate fluctuations distort the trend of dollar figures.

In calendar 1993, for example, Japan's current account surplus rose to a record \$131.35 billion, but in yen terms fell two per cent to 14.60 trillion yen (\$135 billion) — the first such decline in three years.

Israel economic growth set to dip, says forecast

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's strong economic growth will start to dip next year unless the government acts to cool down real estate and share prices, a leading forecaster said Tuesday.

Yakov Sheinin of the consulting firm Economic Models Ltd. predicted growth would drop to about three per cent in 1995 from an expected six per cent this year unless the government changed course.

"If the stock market and real estate continue to climb at a very high rate then the economy will deviate from production into the financial sector. Growth will come down," he told Reuters.

Mr. Sheinin, echoing controversial comments last year by central bank governor

Jacob Fraokel, said only speeding up of the government's privatisation programme could soak up liquidity in Israel's stock market and prevent share prices rising too high.

The government could also ease soaring real estate prices, another drain on productive investment, by putting more land on the market. The state owns most of the land in Israel.

"The government agrees on both of these policies in theory but there has been little real movement."

Israel has averaged about five per cent annual growth in gross national product over the past five years, spurred by a wave of immigration from the countries of the former Soviet Union.

Iraqi U.N. sanctions cost Turkey \$20 billion

MANAMA (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller has estimated that U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq including the closure of the two Iraqi oil pipelines through Turkey had cost Ankara around \$20 billion.

"Turkey's financial losses from that (the sanctions) are estimated to be around \$20 billion," Bahrain's newspaper Al Ayam quoted Ms. Ciller as saying in an interview in Ankara.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 10, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The New Moon in Aquarius is short lived going into Pisces later in the evening as we celebrate the Chinese New Year. A friend in a position of authority is still unable to do you the favour you need.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is one of those fine days and evenings when associates, comrades, kin are all willing to cooperate with you in whatever you may have in mind, but it requires that you get in touch with them early.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take time this morning to get office or abode in such charming and neat order that others will be delighted to dwell or work therein.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure you plan more satisfying ways of amusing yourself during spare time. You find that fine benefits can be yours also while combining business with pleasure.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Kin feel you are one to get them out of various dilemmas at this time, so be sure you don't disappoint them in suggesting a solution.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) It would be best to put aside that imperious Leo nature and be more cooperative with others so that you truly help them as well as yourself and get a great deal accomplished.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get busy cutting down on expenses, whether this concerns personal property or business interests, and make a good impression upon higher-ups.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Make sure you know what it is you want to accomplish today, since you are so dynamic that almost anything is possible to you now.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You like to delve into mysteries and the seeming unapproachable. You have a fine opportunity and reason for doing so today. This brings excellent results.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Look to that wonderful friend who is highly intelligent as well as most attractive for the answers to certain problems you now have and follow advice quickly.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are in a friendly mood today and others will respond in kind, so be sure you handle important business and career affairs wisely.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) By being alert and broad-minded you are now able to garner many fine, new ideas that can be put into operation quickly to your benefit.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Listen to your intuitive promptings today if you want to get the greatest benefits possible. These can also help you to come to a far better understanding with usual allies.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 11, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Mercury is going retrograde today giving us a good opportunity to catch up on projects from the past. Beneath all the surface disturbances, there is a positive influence that will advance your favourite interests.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The ideal day to begin any new plans you may have in mind. Be sure you contact early those persons you want to cooperate with you and set appointments.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) The way in which you handle your credit and other important obligations will make either a good or bad impression on higher-ups.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) By changing your attitude at this time to a more friendly one, you find that you come to a real understanding with both business and personal contacts.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Use that fine comradeship with close ties now and you soon find that much support and cooperation, understanding is yours.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Shopping should be first on the agenda today, whether it is for the smallest personal item or buying a home, car, parts, etc.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is the day to get together with associates who think straight and have much influence and can assist you with matters of property or some new project you have in mind.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) By being less reserved, you find that many will be attracted to you now and life becomes far more successful and happy. Make as many new contacts as you can.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) There is every opportunity now to garner the information you need secretly that will help you to settle your affairs more wisely.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Sociability is the keynote today and tonight, so be sure to get an early start and call upon key people so that you can advance more quickly in your career.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) The right day to get in touch with those who can help to greater success in your chosen field, but you must show that you have particular talents that are marketable.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) That fine mind is working very cleverly now and you are ridding yourself of inhibitions, so this is the time to take the steps that will lead you into a more successful channel of life.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Show that you are an upright citizen by getting taxes and other government bills paid up, as well as all personal and business debts that are pressing.

Congo agrees to IMF austerity measures

BRAZAVILLE (R) — Congo agreed in principle Tuesday to International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity measures in exchange for external loans, official sources said.

Under the terms of the deal, spelled out in a letter of intent to Washington, Congo undertakes to cut its bloated civil service, end fixed prices, introduce a fuel tax, raise the cost of utilities and privatise or restructure state-owned firms.

Badly hit by last month's devaluation of the CFA franc and shaken by factional fighting tearing its capital apart, Congo is desperate for cash. But the IMF has stipulated radical steps to streamline the economy before any more aid is granted.

Congo's oil revenue has

been frittered away on loss-making state-owned companies and an administrative sector out of all proportion to its three million population.

Under the IMF deal, which Congo hopes to sign in the next few months, the government agrees to shave at least 20,000 employees from its 60,000-strong payroll.

State refinery Congolaise de Raffinage, which currently processes less than half its capacity of one million tonnes, will either be liquidated or forced to find new partners.

The government, which has received no external loans for the last three years, also undertakes to pay off its internal debt of 400 billion CFA (\$670 million).

Singaporeans snap up foreign property

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Singaporeans are pouring millions of dollars into land and houses as far afield as the United States and Australia as local property prices soar, real estate experts say.

"In the last three or four years, Singaporeans have invested millions of dollars in property overseas," said Kevin Wilkinson, head of Hill Samuel Merchant Bank Asia, one of Singapore's biggest real estate financiers.

Mr. Wilkinson said that while no figures were available, the amount of Singapore dollars going into foreign property is "growing very rapidly each year," spurred by a strong local currency and relatively low prices abroad.

"This trend has not reached

a fever pitch yet. Investing overseas may be the way many Singaporeans will go in the near future," he said.

Agents say that local property in prime areas is now priced at an average of 600 Singapore dollars (\$375) per square foot.

"The 100 to 300 Singapore dollars (\$63 to \$166) per square foot for property in cities like Melbourne and Atlanta are good buys by comparison," one agent said.

Singaporeans making their first property investment abroad often pick Perth and London where brokers said yields are much higher.

Other favourites are Malaysia, New Zealand and more recently, the United States.

Indian demand puts lining into silver

LONDON (AFP) — Demand from India has driven up the price of silver which recently reached the highest point since 1990, experts here have said.

Only a few months ago, in the autumn of 1993, the price had been depressed by uncertainty about the strength of recovery in the U.S. economy and the development of photographic film which does not use silver bromide.

For nearly a week the price has held above \$5.20 an ounce on the London market, having reached \$5.43.

The price had firmed at the end of the year, from less than \$4 in September, to stabilise above \$5 in response to buying by the jewellery industry before Christmas and by recovery

in the United States.

Experts say that the main factor behind prices now is growing physical demand from Indian buyers.

"India represents one fifth of the total demand, soon a quarter," said precious metals expert at brokers UBS, Andy Smith.

In India many people use silver as an investment. Silver is the only precious metal which is relatively inexpensive for buyers with modest incomes, experts said.

Imports by India have nearly tripled within a year in response to an easing of customs regulations applying to the movement of the metal which were introduced in February 1993.

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- If accompanied by your spouse buy a First Class round trip ticket Amman - Paris - New York, pay only 50% for your spouse and fly both the Concorde.

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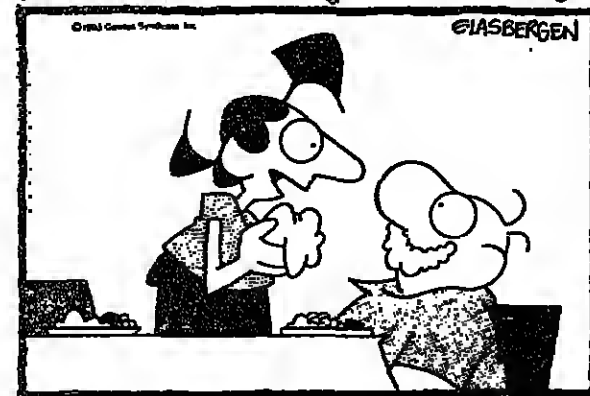
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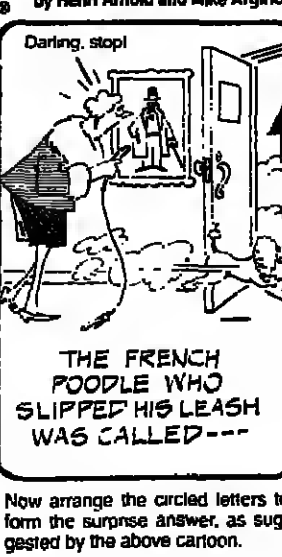
By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SULEO
VABOE
NCOBBA
LOUTTE

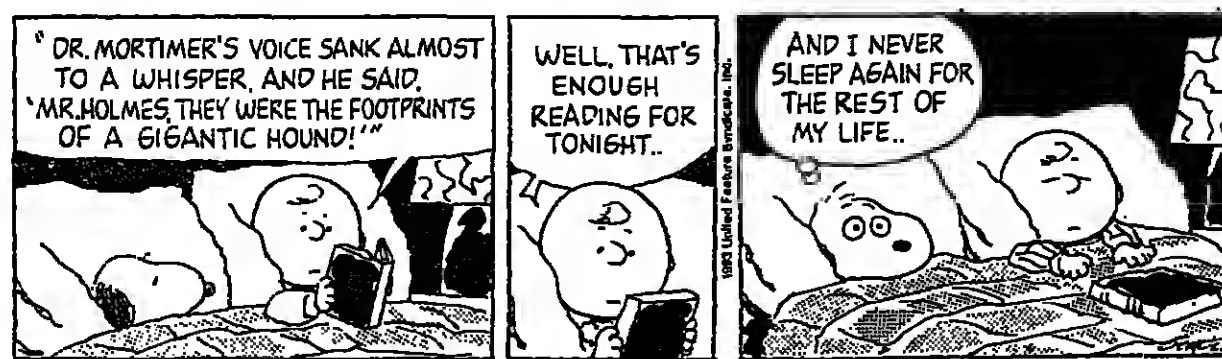


THE FRENCH PEOPLE WHO SLIPPED HIS LEASH WAS CALLED---

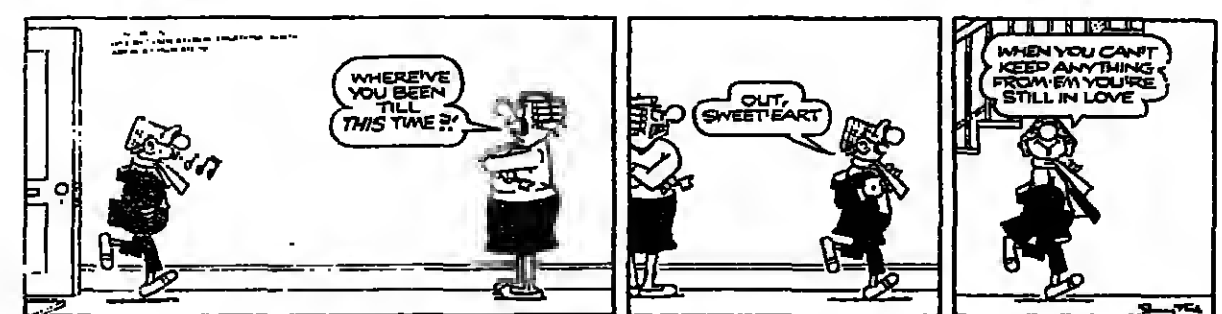
Print answer here: "O O O O O O O O O O"

Yesterday's Jumbles: FAMED GRIPE IMPORT POWDER
Answer: How friends described the self-centered woman — "ME OEEP"

Peanuts



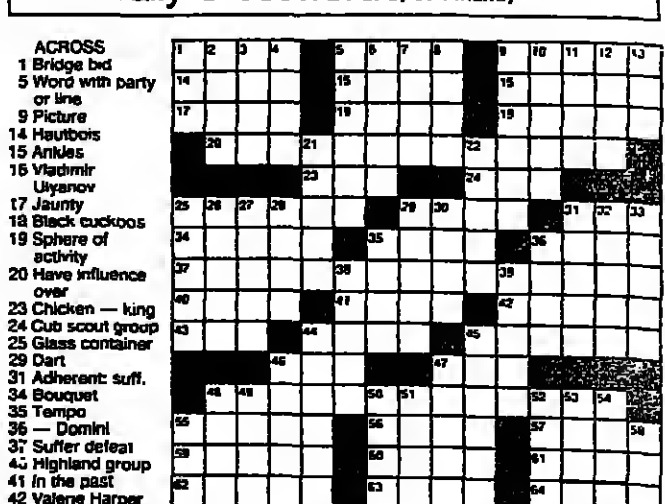
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by C.F. Murray



- ACROSS**
- Bridge bid
 - Word with party or line
 - Picture
 - Habitats
 - Antles
 - Vladimir
 - Ukrainov
 - Jaunty
 - Black cuckoo
 - Sphere of activity
 - Have influence over
 - Chicken — lung
 - Cub scout group
 - Glass container
 - Dart
 - Adherent suff.
 - Bouquet
 - Tempo
 - Domini
 - Suffer defeat
 - Highland group
 - In the past
 - Valerie Harper sitcom
 - Attention-getter
 - Acres Mesra
 - Harold's sister
 - Rocky Adam
 - Larica
 - Keep mum
 - Yrie
 - To shelter
 - New York canal
 - Light-footed
 - Edible plant
 - Stock market
 - Fall flower
 - Werhol
 - Succup
- DOWN**
- Burst
 - Eve's son
 - Angry
 - precedent
 - Steady
 - Singer Tucker
 - Dismayed
 - Dorothy or Lilian
 - Earth
 - Plumed wader
 - Washington balls
 - Three Mer. — Horse
 - Lama
 - Mrs. Bunker
 - Quantity
 - Papal vel
 - Swine
 - Govt. agents
 - Duel
 - Recent
 - (having trouble)
 - Derogatory
 - Ol musical
 -
 - German
 - City
 - Yarn
 - Lone Ranger's sidekick
 - To —
 - human
 - Dear horn
 - Military group
 - Avancous
 - of Two Cms
 - Bagen's
 - My Friend —
 - Doc
 - Luggage
 - Deer horn
 - Military group
 - Mursead
 - Pearl Buck heroine
 - Page
 - My Friend —
 - Doc
 - Cote sound
 - English river

NATO air strike would leave Russia isolated from West

MOSCOW (R) — NATO air strikes in Bosnia would shake Russia's pro-Western foreign policy, raise emotional calls in parliament to support traditional Serb positions — fellow Slavs and Orthodox Christians.

Commentators say an alliance go-ahead for action would humiliate President Boris Yeltsin's domestic and international stage, his opinion not even sought, still less heeded by the West.

The president, the government and the State Duma (parliament) are one in opposing any bombing. Yevgeny Amhatsumov, a prominent centrist deputy, told journalists.

The former Yugoslavia is one area of world politics where Russia has retained at least the semblance of the status of a world power. Nationalists still buoyed by December's electoral triumphs could only benefit by the isolation.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Mikhail Demurin made clear Russia would not just throw up its arms in anger. "We hope the strikes never come and then we won't have to respond

to them."

Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin warned this week that strikes would throw a shadow on the West.

Ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who controls one of the biggest factions in the State Duma legislature, showed no sign of moderating his position as a NATO decision approached from a Brussels meeting.

"If any country sends its aircraft to bomb Bosnia this will mean a war against Russia, the unleashing of a third world war," he told journalists at the Duma.

"(Deputies) will force the Russian government to bomb the country that sent the planes and destroy it," he said.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy will gain no support for such radical steps. But Communist, centrist and pro-Yeltsin deputies are likely to share his anger. Nationalist Minister Sergei Shakhrai said earlier this week he could foresee a world war if NATO used force.

To Western dismay, a NATO air strike could become

the first issue uniting Russia's fractious legislature since it was created last month.

Russia is limited in what immediate measures it could take.

The State Duma, scheduled to hear brief addresses on Bosnia Wednesday, could demand an end to sanctions against Serbia and call for the withdrawal of the 1,200 Russian peacekeeping troops from the former Yugoslavia.

It could also demand the resignation of Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, whom many deputies see as an unwanted remnant of a radical reformist team purged in a recent government reshuffle.

Mr. Kozyrev has, however, taken a stronger public line on Bosnia in recent weeks, denouncing calls for air strikes.

Mr. Yeltsin has broad powers to override parliament, but needs the legislature's support on pressing domestic issues. He would be reluctant to defy the Duma on a sensitive issue like Bosnia.

Many Western leaders argue

U.N. resolution give Secretary-General Boutros Ghali the power he needs to call air strikes against Serb positions around Sarajevo following a weekend attack on a city market that killed 68.

Russia insists such an action would need explicit Security Council approval. Here, it would almost certainly use its veto power — something the West is clearly eager to avoid.

Russia issued a statement after the attack saying those who carried it out should be punished after they were identified. But there has been no evidence Serb forces were responsible, nor do they accept any involvement.

The immediate effect of a NATO action, flouting Russian wishes, might be limited. But the first rift with the West on a major world issue in the post-Soviet period could sour relations in the long term.

Nationalists and Communist groupings could benefit from the differences, portraying them as symptomatic of more basic conflicts of interest overlooked in the euphoria of the "post-cold war" era.



YEAR OF THE DOG: A Beijing hat vendor (left) beginning of the year of the dog. Dogs have attracts an amused crowd at the Ditan Park become popular in recent years, especially with Chinese New Year temple fair, ahead of the the newly rich (AFP photo)

Porcelain doll auctioned for \$280,000

LONDON (AFP) — A porcelain doll made in Germany in 1919 was auctioned here by Sotheby's for a record-setting price of £188,500 (\$280,000). The well-preserved blue-eyed doll, wearing a red cotton dress and a straw hat, was purchased by a German collector who was not identified. The doll was made by the German company Kammer Und Reinhardt and, according to Sotheby's, is one of a kind. It had been estimated at £150,000 (\$225,000). The previous record price ever paid for a doll was in 1989, when a doll made by the same manufacturer was purchased for £90,200 (\$135,000).

Shanghai court to look at major illegal CD case

BEIJING (R) — A Shanghai court has agreed to hear evidence on a complaint against a Taiwan man accused of illegally copying and exporting CDs in the biggest case of its kind in China. The People's Daily said Wednesday. Xu Huale, already known to Taiwan authorities for illegally copying compact discs, entered China in March 1993 and produced 139,000 CDs in joint ventures in Suzhou and Hangzhou, it said. He sold most of those on the world market, damaging China's reputation and causing a loss of \$1.78 million to the International Record Association of South East Asia, which lodged the court complaint through its Shanghai office. The newspaper said the case had brought to light the illegal proliferation of laser CD production in China. The government has approved only four such plants, but there are already 20 companies with a total of nearly 30 production lines making CDs, it said. Each line has an annual production capacity of three million discs, many of them illegal copies, it said.

Holiday chaos feared as Koreans jam roads

SEOUL (R) — Millions of South Koreans battling heavy snow poured on to the country's highways Wednesday to start a Lunar New Year holiday that could produce "the worst traffic mess in history," a Transport Ministry official said. About half of the country's 43 million people were expected to be on the roads during the three-day holiday, which started Wednesday. Many factories and shops will not open until next Monday. Television station showed extensive footage of highways around Seoul so jammed with cars and other vehicles they resembled vast parking lots. "Heavy snow across the country could produce the worst traffic mess in history," a ministry official said. From early Tuesday afternoon, tens of thousands of people carrying gifts packed the airports, bus terminals and train stations in Seoul. Ministry officials have warned massive congestion was inevitable with about three million people leaving the capital alone.

Couple critically wounded in Jamaica robbery

KINGSTON (AFP) — An American couple rafting down the Rio Grande, a popular tourist attraction in eastern Jamaica, were shot and critically wounded Tuesday in a robbery, police said. John Hubert and his wife, Lucille, of Pennsylvania were admitted to a local hospital and reported in critical condition. The couple were among a group of tourists rafting down the river when they were attacked by two gunmen. Their raft capsized when they tried to escape and they were shot during a struggle with the gunmen, police said.

Study finds IVF babies develop normally

SYDNEY (R) — The world's largest study comparing the physical, psychological and social development of a group of infants born through in vitro fertilisation (IVF) with a group conceived naturally has found little if any difference. The Australian study found that, on average, IVF children were in fact more socially skilled and more inclined to initiate social interaction than naturally conceived infants. Team leader, George Hailasz told Reuters Wednesday the study's authors attributed this to IVF children having older parents and often being only children.

Clarke: Major's leadership is not in crisis

PARIS (R) — British Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke insisted Wednesday that Prime Minister John Major's leadership was not in crisis and forecast that economic recovery would end the "present silly season."

The finance minister warned Britain's ruling conservatives they faced election defeat if they tried to oust Mr. Major, whose attempts to reassert his authority have been dogged by a string of sex and finance scandals in his party.

"My view is that there isn't a leadership crisis in the party, and that John Major is going to carry on leading us," he told a news conference on the second day of a visit to France.

Mr. Clarke, tipped as the most likely successor if Mr. Major were forced out, earlier told a French questioner that anti-European Conservative rebels who opposed the prime minister were even more opposed to him.

Mr. Major moved to quell right-wing party mutineers last week with a new "get-tough" approach, but his government was plunged once more into crisis by the bizarre death of a rising star in the Conservative Party.

Stephen Milligan, a 45-year-old member of parliament, was found dead in his London home Monday wearing women's stockings and a plastic bag tied over his head, police said.

Mr. Clarke did not comment on the latest embarrassment but said voters' choices would ultimately be determined by the success of the government's policies on the economy, crime-fighting, education and health care.

"So the present silly season will, I think, eventually come to an end," he said.

Asked when the Conservatives would stop feuding, he said: "I haven't seen any feuding — in the last two or three days certainly... I don't find very many significant members of the Conservative Party being involved in that."

Speaking to reporters Tuesday night, Mr. Clarke warned: "Nobody is going to be a Conservative prime minister unless we actually get the government back into control and be put in a position where it has a reasonable prospect of winning the next election."

The party deposed Margaret Thatcher in 1990, fearing that she had become an electoral liability after a decade in power.

Mr. Clarke said: "To come into a leadership crisis only four years after the last one would in my view be folly for us all and would seem to be arguing about who leads the government to defeat."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Deng shows age in rare appearance

BEIJING (R) — Looking gaunt and frail, China's 89-year-old paramount leader Deng Xiaoping appeared on state television Wednesday for the first time in more than a year. Tightly supported on both sides by his daughters, Mr. Deng, the architect of China's economic reforms, walked slowly into a reception in Shanghai to mark the start of the Lunar New Year. He greeted guests at the reception and smiled, but the sound of his voice was not broadcast. Xinhua News Agency, in its account of his appearance, emphasised the elderly leader's good health. After wishing that the nation will have happiness and unity, "Deng expressed the hope that the Chinese people will score still greater victories in the new year," the news agency reported. As if to underscore the fact that Mr. Deng is still active, television also showed him braving a cold drizzle to visit the newly constructed Yangpu Bridge in December and going to a luxury hotel in Shanghai in January.

Pakistan tells India: Stop insulting Bhutto

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan wants India to stop insulting Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto as decades-old feud between the hostile neighbours turns personal. "The Indian leadership has launched a campaign of defamation against the person of the prime minister of Pakistan," Foreign Ministry spokesman Munir Akram told reporters Wednesday. The verbal duel began last week when Ms. Bhutto, speaking at a human rights conference in Geneva, accused Indian security forces of widespread atrocities against Muslims in the disputed territory of Kashmir. Indian President Shankar Dayal Sharma responded, saying Ms. Bhutto had "lost her roots as well as touch with reality." Mr. Sharma said Ms. Bhutto was "trying to find fault with India to stay in power in her own country." Salman Khurshid, India's minister of state for external affairs, then likened Ms. Bhutto to a hot air balloon. "What happens when the hot air is gone? What happens when you come home like a simple cold rubber? That's the time we will know how charismatic she is," Mr. Khurshid told India's state-run television in a broadcast to be aired Wednesday. His remarks were circulated Tuesday in a news release issued by the government-owned television station.

China 'blocks' U.N. pressure on N. Korea

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Chinese opposition helped prevent the U.N. Security Council from agreeing Tuesday to adopt sanctions against North Korea over its nuclear programme, Western diplomats said. The U.S.-sponsored meeting of the council's five permanent members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — was held to try to reach a consensus on how to get Pyongyang to open its nuclear sites to international inspectors. On Friday, China's Security Council partners told its envoy that they wished to work toward imposing economic sanctions if North Korea refused to cooperate. But China, which has veto power on council votes, believes the United Nations should continue negotiating with North Korea. Western diplomats said North Korea is suspected of building nuclear weapons, but denies it has done so. It has refused to allow International Atomic Energy Agency officials to carry out inspections at all sites in its territory. The council's permanent members are to meet again Thursday at U.N. Headquarters in New York.

Abkhazia conflict flares again

TBILISI (R) — Attempts to secure peace in Georgia's breakaway province of Abkhazia lay in tatters Wednesday as both sides traded accusations and Georgia appealed to the world community for help. Georgia's Foreign Ministry, in a statement released Tuesday, accused Abkhaz armed units of burning down eight villages and killing more than 100 Georgians in the Gali region of southern Abkhazia. The former Soviet republic appealed to Russia, the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) for assistance and support. Georgia and Russia signed a major friendship treaty last week giving Moscow military bases in the republic. Civil war broke out in Georgia in August 1992 when the government sent troops and tanks to Abkhazia to quell local demands for more autonomy. A peace agreement reached last July broke down, and Abkhaz rebels seized full control of the Black Sea province from Georgian troops in September. The two sides agreed a fresh ceasefire in December, and last month issued a joint appeal in Geneva for a U.N. peacekeeping force to enable some 250,000 Georgian refugees from Abkhazia to begin in return home.

U.S. asks Aristide to fill premier's post

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide should fill Haiti's political vacuum by naming a new prime minister, the United States said. The move has been vacant since mid-December, when Prime Minister Robert Malval resigned after deciding that his four-month-old government could not function in the face of harassment by Haiti's military-backed hardliners. In Haiti, 14 business groups, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the move could break the political deadlock. The State Department urged Mr. Aristide to make a nationwide appeal among Haiti's factions. "We believe it would be an act of political wisdom for President Aristide to fill the political vacuum that now exists," spokesman Michael McCurry said. Mr. McCurry said a new government could jumpstart the stalled process aimed at restoring Mr. Aristide to power.

Colombia court wants president tried over U.S. troops

BOGOTA (R) — A Colombian court recommended Tuesday night that President Cesar Gaviria be tried by Congress for allowing 150 U.S. troops into the country without proper parliament approval. The Council of State, a type of supreme court that considers whether government actions are legal, ruled that Mr. Gaviria had flouted the constitution when he permitted the arrival of the troops last December in the southwestern town of Juanchaco.

The Pentagon says the U.S. troops, from the 46th Engineer Battalion at Fort Rucker, Alabama, are on a training mission with humanitarian aims. But their presence has unleashed a wave of nationalist protest and led to accusations that the soldiers are on a secret mission against drug traffickers.

Mr. Gaviria explained in a letter to the council that the troops' two-month presence in Juanchaco to build a school, a clinic and a road was covered by a 47-year-old mutual defence and friendship treaty.

The judges rejected his arguments and recommended that Congress put him on trial and that the attorney-general investigate. Colombia's 1991 constitution states that the president must seek the prior approval of Congress or of the Council of State before permitting the transit of combat troops.

Disaster-weary L.A. digs out from mudslides

LOS ANGELES (R) — Disaster-weary residents dug out from mudslides Tuesday following a powerful winter storm that trapped people in their homes and forced others to evacuate as mother nature wreaked her latest havoc.

The worst-hit areas were those devastated by last November's firestorms where flames had stripped hillsides, leaving them at the mercy of the driving rain.

On Jan. 17, a magnitude 6.7 earthquake devastated much of Los Angeles, killing 60 people and causing about \$30 billion in damage.

During the height of Monday's storm, avalanches of mud poured off the hills above the movie star colony of Malibu and crashed into ocean-side houses, breaking down doors and rushing into homes.

Pacific Coast Highway, the main road linking Malibu to Los Angeles, 20 miles (32 km) to the east, was closed Tuesday as crews used bulldozers and earthmovers to clear away oozing mud more than two feet (60 cm) deep.

Authorities said it was not known precisely how much damage had been caused by the storm, but there were no reported deaths or injuries.

Some people trapped in their homes in Malibu were rescued by city workers who picked them up in the scoops of bulldozers and earthmovers and drove them to safety.

Hundreds of evacuees were unable to return in their homes

Tuesday because mud-covered roads had either been closed down by authorities or were impassable.

Motorists forced to abandon their cars when the vehicles were swamped with mud were also unable to retrieve them or have them towed away.

In affluent Orange County, south of Los Angeles, a tornado touched down Monday night and carved a 2-1/2 mile (four km) swath of destruction, downing power lines and sending trees crashing onto buildings and cars.

Three dozen families were forced to evacuate their homes in the Los Angeles suburb of Altadena, as boulders and mud came crashing down fire-denuded hillsides. Another 12 families were temporarily trapped in their homes by the slide.

One trapped resident, Dermot Cooper, said, "the boulders were coming down with such force the ground was shaking. I thought it was another earthquake."

The force of the mudslides was so great that they carried two-ton metal plates down hillsides.

Federal Emergency Management Agency officials, already deluged by applications for aid from victims of the January quake, said those whose properties were damaged by the mudslides also qualified for aid as the slides were a result of the fires.

President Bill Clinton declared a federal disaster in the burned areas in December.

Many residents said their homes had survived the firestorms and the earthquake only to be deluged with mud from the storm, which dumped more than two inches (five cm) of rain in some places.

Meanwhile, last month's Los Angeles earthquake caused between \$13 billion and \$20 billion in damage, California officials said Tuesday, making it the second worst natural disaster in U.S. history.

The most costly U.S. natural disaster was hurricane Andrew, which caused \$30 billion in losses in southern Florida and Louisiana in 1992.

State officials also announced that the cost of the earthquake to federal, state and local taxpayers will be about \$11.6 billion.

Dick Andrews, director of the California office of emergency services, announcing the damage estimate, told reporters that the devastating Jan. 17 earthquake was one of the worst natural disasters in U.S. history.

The damage estimate is the first accurate one released since the 6.7 magnitude quake rocked Los Angeles, killing 61 people, injuring 8,500 and destroying many homes and freeways.

In the days after the quake, state officials released a rough estimate of \$15 billion to \$30 billion in damage.

Mr. Andrews said the \$13 billion to \$20 billion estimate could be revised upwards again if there was damage to sewer

and water systems which had not yet been detected.

State Finance Director Russell Gould said the quake's cost to taxpayers is estimated at \$11.6 billion.

The federal government's share was put at \$9.5 billion, the state's at \$1.9 billion and local government at \$135 million. President Clinton has already asked Congress for \$9.5 billion in federal disaster relief funds.

Blizzard blinds northeast

In a separate development, a severe winter storm dumped up to nine inches (23 cm) of snow on the northeast Tuesday, causing havoc in air, road and rail travel and sending thousands of workers home early.

The storm is more bad news for a region that is already out of snow removal money, road salt and school snow days.

As snow blinded the New York area, with up to three inches (7.5 cm) falling in an hour, the three major airports halted all inbound flights for most of the day with a handful of flights managing to take off in the near-zero visibility.

The city received an estimated nine inches, and a limited snow emergency was declared by officials, a move designed to clear key arteries of parked cars. Problems were expected to worsen overnight with the snow turning to freezing rain and sleet.



'Grouping two Arab teams should have been avoided'

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Grouping two Arab teams Saudi Arabia and Morocco — in this summer's World Cup soccer championship in the United States should have been avoided for the better interests of the game, a U.S. organising official said.

Teddy Roe, government relations specialist with the World Cup 1994 organising committee, speaking to journalists in Gulf countries on the worldnet dialogue programme.

"We personally look forward to seeing Saudi Arabia and Morocco play, but there would have been more value if the teams were playing in separate groups."

Saudi Arabia is competing in its first-ever World Cup finals and soccer pundits here felt that the December draw

spoiled the pleasure of the Arab nations by grouping them together with Morocco. The other two teams in their Group F are the Netherlands and Belgium.

In oil-rich Saudi Arabia, many are planning to fly to the United States to support their national team and to watch the world event. Roe said he did not anticipate any great problems for visitors wanting to book hotel accommodation, despite the crush of spectators.

Security was the number one budget item, Roe said, adding that the committee was taking it very seriously, despite the diminished problems of hooliganism when England did not qualify.

Roe's principal task is to act as liaison between the committee, the nine host venue committee and various agencies of the U.S. federal government.

Prost to test drive for McLaren

LONDON (R) — Frenchman Alain Prost has accepted an invitation from McLaren to test their new Peugeot-powered car, the Formula One team's managing director Ron Dennis confirmed Wednesday.

Dennis said he had invited Prost, who won his fourth world drivers' title with Williams last season, to test the new MP4/9 car and that he had been "happy to accept the offer."

"The invitation to drive the all-new Peugeot-powered McLaren MP4/9 will hopefully lead to Alain driving for Marlboro McLaren Peugeot in the coming Formula One season."

"This invitation must be understood within the context of the long and warm friendship that Alain and I have had, on and off the racing track, for 10 years. When Alain tests, he will do so as a free agent."

Prost, who announced his retirement from Formula One last September at the Portu-



Alain Prost

guese Grand Prix in Estoril, attended the McLaren factory at Woking Tuesday for a seat fitting.

Dennis's comments suggest he is close to completing a deal to secure Prost for the season after persuading the 38-year-old Frenchman to abandon his plans to retire after a 13-year career at the top.

McLaren have signed only one driver, Finland's Mika Hakkinen, for the 1994 season and Dennis said at the team's launch on Jan. 28 that he hoped to have his plans settled by mid-February.

It is widely believed that Prost received a "golden handshake" from Williams-Renault when he retired after only one year of his two-year contract with the team.

IOC chief plans Sarajevo visit soon

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Olympic chief Juan Antonio Samaranch said Wednesday he plans to visit Sarajevo in the next few days to show the movement's solidarity with the shattered host city of the 1984 Winter Olympics.

"By this symbolic presence, we want to tell the people of Sarajevo, 'we are still with you 10 years later,'" the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) told Swiss Radio in a telephone interview from Lillehammer.

The IOC, backed by the United Nations general assembly, has called for an ancient Greek-style "Olympic truce" in Bosnia for this month's Lillehammer Games.

Hopes for a truce, which was to have started last Saturday, were shattered immediately by a mortar attack on a crowded Sarajevo market that killed 68 people. Some Olympic officials suggested Samaranch would put off his planned visit to the city.

Samaranch gave no details of when he would make the trip to the besieged Bosnian capital.

Ulvang warned not to 'bite hand that feeds'

LILLEHAMMER (R) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC), Wednesday reminded outspoken Norwegian skier Vegard Ulvang, who has branded the organisation undemocratic, that he partly owes his success to the world sport body.

"I would say this. First of all, he owes his worldwide celebrity to his talent, of course, to his skills as an athlete."

"But his international and world celebrity (status) owes to a certain degree to the Olympic games, to the games of the IOC," he said.

Norwegian deputy team chief Armand Carlsen said there had been no discussion in the national Olympic committee about Ulvang's remarks.

But Lillehammer organisers were astounded by his attack because he has been given the honour of taking the oath of allegiance.

"He is accepting on the one hand to give the oath and then not accepting the organisation that is the owner of the games," said Lillehammer information chief Tor Aune.

An opinion poll in Norway last week showed Samaranch, once an official in the Fascist government of the Spanish dictator General Franco, is widely disliked. Surveys also show Ulvang is the country's most popular sportsman.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Germans avoid Norwegian beer

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Germans are avoiding sky-high Norwegian beer prices by importing 30,000 litres duty-free via their embassy in Oslo. "The Germans are very organised in drinking beer. Everyone knows that," said Peter Bizer, spokesman for the German team and its sponsors. During the games, the German house in Lillehammer, funded by sponsors, is expected to serve 30,000 litres of beer and 9,000 bottles of German wine to athletes, officials, journalists and guests. Beer in Norway costs about 40 crowns (\$5.3) a half litre.

Zetterberg to miss World Cup

ANTWERP, Belgium (AFP) — International striker Par Zetterberg has been ruled out of Sweden's squad for the World Cup finals after injuring a knee. The 23-year-old Anderlecht player underwent a knee operation at the Apra Clinic in Antwerp, where Marco van Basten has also been treated. Tuesday, "There is no way Zetterberg will be playing in the World Cup," said Geert de Clerck, a doctor at the clinic. De Clerck said Zetterberg has cartilage problems in the right knee and ruptured ligaments. The Belgian league's player of the year in 1993 will need four months to get back into action, the doctor said. Zetterberg was injured playing for Anderlecht against RWD Molenbeek at the weekend.

Church leaders blast opening ceremony as pagan

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Norwegian church leaders have blasted the opening ceremony of the Lillehammer Olympics as an irreligious pagan tribute to ancient Greek gods. Sixteen leaders of Norway's Lutheran Church, including three bishops, wrote to urge organisers to drop the Olympic hymn from Saturday's opening ceremony, saying it conflicted with Christian beliefs. The hymn, to be sung by a large choir including Norwegian children, was written about a century ago as a prayer to Zeus, the lord of Olympus, asking his blessing for the games. "We think this is an over-reaction by the church leaders," said Odd Ustad, a spokesman for the Lillehammer organisers, adding there were no plans to drop the hymn. "This has not caused any problems at previous Olympics."

Charlton shock high-flying Blackburn

LONDON (R) — A player who cost first division Charlton nothing to sign sent his first division team Blackburn spinning out of the English Football Association (F.A.) Cup in a tense fourth round replay Tuesday. Darren Pitcher, the former Charlton youth team captain, hit a 20-metre drive into the net in the 15th minute for the only goal of the match. Blackburn, with a team estimated to be worth around £22 million (\$33 million) and spearheaded by England striker Alan Shearer, were kept firmly in check by the visitors' defence for the remainder of the match. Charlton had already gone close with a 20-yard Garry Nelson drive after seven minutes which forced England goalkeeper Tim Flowers to tip the ball over the bar. Two minutes later Nelson again came close with a low shot held at full stretch by Flowers as Charlton, second in division one, took the game to their more illustrious opponents.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH
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THAT EXTRA CHANCE

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 7 3
♥ A K 7 5 4 2
♦ 9 4 3 2
♣ 10

EAST
♠ J 9
♥ 10 6 4 3 2
♦ Q 8
♣ J 9 8 3

SOUTH
♠ A Q 5 4 2
♥ A 7 5
♦ Q 6
♣ A K 6

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
3 NT Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Queen of ♠

Eric Stanley Gardner would have called it "The Case of the Flying Fishers." It's the syndrome that makes a player commit to a line before taking time to consider all the alternatives.

South's jump to three on trump, intended to show extra values, contrived the auction. As a result, North-South did not even investigate slam possibilities. That was

fortunate, since the 4-1 diamond break would have made the taking of 12 tricks an impossible assignment.

West led the queen of hearts, striking a tremendous blow for the defense because it removed dummy's only entry to the diamonds. Even so, South was not really perturbed until West discarded a club on the second diamond. Suddenly, there were only eight tricks available. Declarer cashed a third diamond, on which West carefully shed a spade, then tried the spade finesse. With spades not breaking and the king wrong, declarer had no way to establish the fulfilling trick.

Declarer overlooked the club suit as a source of a ninth trick. Instead of going after diamonds at the second trick, declarer should have cashed the ace and king of clubs, then led a third round of the suit. If that suit breaks 3-3, or if East has two honors doubleton, as in the diagram, a third trick sets up in that suit and there is still a diamond entry to dummy. If the club suit proves unfruitful, declarer can still fall back on diamonds and the spade finesse at no cost.

Norwegian medal expectations high, says coach

LILLEHAMMER (R) — Norway's unprecedented sweep of five cross country gold medals at the last Winter Olympics will be impossible to match, according to their men's coach who says the country should brace itself for disappointment.

Inge Braaten harbours no expectation of repeating the astounding success of Albertville in 1992 when Bjorn Dacheil and Vegard Ulvang both won two individual titles and another gold with the relay team, but he says the Norwegian people do.

"For many Norwegians there is great expectation that we will win all the gold again. But it's impossible to do as well this time," said Braaten.

"Only once in modern Olympic history has the same nation won all the distances at the same championships."

Norway achieved the feat for

the first time since Sweden in 1948, but then there were only two individual races and a relay.

But apart from history, there are two other reasons why Braaten will be satisfied with less than five golds in Lillehammer.

Other nations have copied Norway's lead in high-altitude training and waxing techniques, eradicating the advantage they had in France.

And the formidable form of Kazakhstan's Vladimir Smirnov, who has won five of the six World Cup races this winter, means the Norwegians are going to have a tougher time in their own tracks than they did in Albertville.

After failing to win gold at their national sport in a major championship since the 1982 world championships in Oslo, and before that the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics, Norway adopted radical tactics in the 1990s.

"After 1989 we started doing altitude training and developed a lot of new methods for waxing skis and therefore we were maybe one to two years ahead of other nations in 1991 and '92," said Braaten, who became head coach in 1990.

"So, in the last few years the other nations have copied Norway, doing high altitude training and new waxing and therefore we don't have that on our side this time."

In four seasons under Braaten's guidance, Norway have won 12 of 15 possible gold medals in major men's championships.

Bot Braaten expects Smirnov, a former world champion in the old Soviet Union team, to spoil the party for the tens of thousands of Norwegian spectators expected to line the

tracks at Birkebeineren by winning his first Olympic gold.

"This season has shown us it will not be so easy as the Norwegian people think. They should be satisfied if we can get one gold medal. They know Smirnov is very good," said Braaten, who will quit as coach after the games.

All is not gloom, though, as Braaten has altered the Norwegians' training this season in an attempt to gain an edge, albeit at the cost of World Cup form.

"The main competition this year is for the Olympics, so we have not approached the World Cup in the same way."

"We have done a lot of training in December whereas we stop our usual training in November."

"I think because of that our best form will come a little later this season."

How skating losers can end up with gold

By Brian Creighton
Reuter

HAMAR, Norway — Millions of television viewers who did not understand how Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean won the European ice dance title last month were in good company.

World skating chief Olaf Poulsen — and for that matter, Torvill and Dean themselves — could not figure it out either.

With the world's best skaters due to take to the Olympic ice next week in Hamar's Olympic amphitheatre here is a brief refresher course for the armchair fans still confused about the complex scoring rules of top-level figure skating.

As far as the basic point scoring is concerned, there is no problem.

In all events the nine judges award entrants two scores from one to six points for each of the two parts: one for technical merit and the other for artistic impression.

More importantly, however, each judge also ranks the skaters in order according to the number of points awarded.

If nobody gets a majority of first-place votes, then second-place votes are counted as well, and so on down the list for each place.

It was that complex mathematical exercise behind the Torvill and Dean victory that caught even experienced commentators off-guard.

Almost everyone in Copenhagen thought the best the Britons could hope for was second place after reigning champions Maia Usova and Alexander Zhulin of Russia had beaten them in the free skating to head them in the overall standings.

Then another Russian couple, Oksana Grischuk and Evgeny Platov, took to the ice and superbly won the free skating final.

That performance promoted Torvill and Dean to first place overall with Grischuk and Platov second and Usova and Zhulin down in third place.

"We don't understand the system, but right now it's wonderful," said a bemused Dean after his comeback win.

Because free skating, the last of three events, accounts for 50 per cent of the total points, each place was worth its equivalent in points through a system known as "factoring."

The winners after three events were the pair with the fewest points.

Torvill and Dean entered the final phase tied in the lead with Usova and Zhulin on 1.6 points. Grischuk and Platov were third on 2.8 points.

Because Grischuk and Platov were more than a full point behind, they could not win the title unless they beat both couples above them in the free

skating, which they did, and unless another couple from behind did the same. None did.

Grischuk and Platov clearly won the free skating, getting the first place votes from seven of the nine judges, the other two going to Usova and Zhulin. They thus earned 1.0 points to give them a total for the competition of 3.8.

Second place in the free skating was then decided on second place votes in that section. Usova and Zhulin's first places then becoming second place voters.

But Torvill and Dean had six second place votes to five for Usova and Zhulin, and second place in the free skating gave the Britons a total of 3.6 points, marginally better than Grischuk and Platov.

To all members of the Jordanian Scandinavian Friendship Association

We are glad to inform you that the tree planting event will still be held on Friday February 11, 1994 at 11:00 a.m. at the Scandinavian Forest. Please bring your own shovels or any useful tools with you. Looking forward to seeing you there.

NOTICE

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AUSTRALIA

NOTICE OF SALE

Date: Sunday, Feb. 13, 1994, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
Location: American Embassy warehouse near 7th Circle

Items to be sold: Used residential and office furnishings and equipment.

Type of sale: Sealed-bid. Bid forms can be obtained on the day of sale.

Conditions of sale:

- 20 per cent cash deposit required on sale day
- Sale items will be available for inspection on sale day
- Bids must be submitted by 1:30 p.m. on sale day
- Bids must be submitted at the American Embassy warehouse
- Bids will be opened and bidders notified beginning Tuesday, Feb. 15, 1994
- Items must be removed within 24 hours after notification. After that period, a JD 50 per day storage fee will be assessed.
- All items are sold on a "where-is, as-is, non-returnable" basis.

T O D A Y	Cinema Tel.: 634144	Cinema Tel.: 699238	Cinema Tel.: 677420	Cinema Tel.: 675571	Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 6251551
	PHILADELPHIA Moira Kelly — in The Cutting Edge Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 Special show for children on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m. Bugs Bunny Film	PLAZA Mahmoud Hamidah/Laila Alawi in OBEEDIENCE WARNING Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD CONCORD "1" DOC HOLLYWOOD Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" FALLING DOWN Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:15 FIGHT 1010 Arabic Play "Hi America" at 8:30	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre presents a play entitled: AL Him Nuron A popular political comedy Actors: Abder Issa, Daoud Jajajel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali in addition to other comedians Every night at 8:15 Tickets are sold all day	AHLAN THEATRE Nabil and Hisham Theatre presents Ahlan Arab Summit Conference (play) daily at 8:30 p.m. Theatre is closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Political parties draw minimal support one year after legalisation

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — More than a year after a new law on political parties went into effect in Jordan, the popular support that the now 22 licensed parties have, with the exception of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), is still considered minimal.

The Nov. 8, 1993 legislative elections clearly showed how little the fan-fair surrounding the legislation of parties and their attempts to lure the masses had succeeded.

The majority of the licensed parties did not field official candidates for the Nov. 8 elections and most of those that did failed to win even a single seat in Parliament.

But eight parties, or eight candidates officially or unofficially running on party tickets, did get at least one seat in the Lower House. The IAF won 16 seats while candidates running as independent Islamists won five.

Seven other parties won a single seat each. They were the centrist Mustakbal Party, the pan-Arab Arab Baath Socialist Party and the Jordan Arab Democratic Party, the leftist Democratic Socialist Party and the Jordan People's Democratic Party (which had a joint ticket with the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party), and the right-of-centre Yakaza and Al Abd parties.

But most of the candidates who won parliamentary seats on behalf of the seven parties did not run on their party tickets although two, Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh of Yakaza and Abdul Hadi Majali of Al Abd, are their respective parties' leaders.

In the post-election frenzy, previously unheard of coalitions emerged and winning candidates announced that they were members of a variety of licensed parties.

Mr. Majali had told the

Jordan Times in September that it would be only after the elections that people "would come out into the open and acknowledge their party affiliations."

Such an approach is typical of all the trappings of the pre-democratic era attitudes when party membership was frowned upon, political analysts say.

The tendency to hide party affiliations is a pre-democratic concept and reflects the attitudes of many of those that took this approach to revealing their party affiliations," said one veteran left-wing political analyst.

The emergence of some 25 basically right-of-centre traditionalist politicians in Parliament can certainly be considered dramatic and bound to give a boost to members of the two right-of-centre coalitions that now exist in Parliament in the next legislative elections.

"Should the National Action Front, (a 17-member parliamentary bloc) and the Jordan National Alliance, (an eight-member parliamentary bloc) be successful in enhancing their policies and public appearance while in Parliament they are certainly likely to win on their respective party tickets in any future election," said an independent political observer.

But these right-of-centre blocs, which group members of the Jordan National Alliance, Al Abd, Yakaza and Al Watan parties in two blocs face problems of regionalism, tribalism and personality politics.

Sectional tendencies which tend to be based on regionalism as well as personality politics based on tribal leadership are the main threats to the long-term cohesion and durability of these blocs and the parties which form them.

"Tribalism and regionalism brought them together and these factors will eventually tear them apart," said the leftist analyst, predicting the

demise of the Jordanian right-wing in the long term. But if the right-of-centre parties face a demise, it is also true that the six licensed left wing parties, appear headed for a decline.

Two of the six licensed parties, the Jordanian Popular Unity Party and the Jordanian Peoples Democratic Party have announced their intention to merge. The two left-wing parties have Palestinian roots.

They fielded six candidates on a joint ticket; one of whom, Bassam Haddadin of Zarka, was successful. In the 1989 elections both parties, although none operating legally at the time, won one seat each in Parliament. Thus, in real terms, these two parties have lost half of their representation in Parliament since 1989.

Two other left-wing parties, those with communist roots, continue to exist as two separate parties, although they were one party up until June 1992. The Jordanian Democratic Socialist Party became an outgrowth of the Jordanian Communist Party in the summer of 1992.

ANALYSIS

In 1989, one member of the Communist Party, Issa Mdanat, became a member of the Lower House. Mr. Mdanat headed the break-away party but failed to regain his seat in the Karak Governorate in the 1993 elections. The only member of either party to win a seat in the 1993-elected Parliament was Balqa candidate Mustapha Shueikat, who is a member of the Democratic Socialist Party.

Another successful candidate who is considered close to the Jordanian Communist Party, although he is not officially a member, is Madaba Deputy Abdul Hafeth Al Shakhaneb.

The two other left-wing

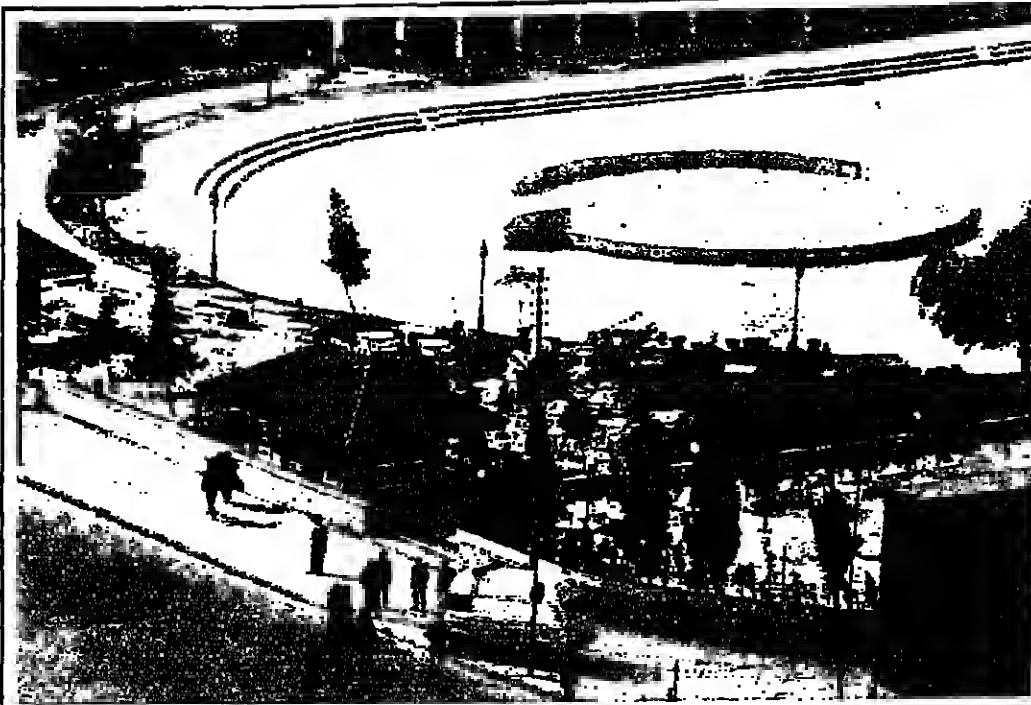
parties which attempted but failed to win any seats in Parliament are the Freedom Party and the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party.

Of the pan-Arab groups, which at the time of the elections only included two parties, one, the Jordanian Socialist Arab Baath Party, fielded four candidates, one of whom is Khalil Haddadin who won a seat in Parliament. The Progressive Arab Baath Party decided not to field any candidates.

Of the three existing centrist parties, only one, the Al Mustakbal Party, was able to field a successful candidate, Hamad Abu Jamous. The most significant other centrist party, the United Arab Democratic Party (known as Waed) successfully overcame an attempt to split its ranks and decided not to participate in the elections because it was still in the organisation stage.

The Islamists, who had a bloc of some 30 deputies as a result of the 1989 elections, won only 22 seats in 1993. The IAF won 16 seats, while independent Islamists won six. Only five of the six independent Islamists had run as such; the sixth emerged as an independent Islamist after the elections.

Thus after the 1992 legalisation of political parties, the number of Islamists, leftists and pan-Arabist in Parliament actually declined while the number of right-of-centre politicians in Parliament increased. Whether this will be reflected in an increase in party membership and popularity will be partially revealed in municipal and union elections held in the coming two years. If the right is successful, the political spectrum in Jordan will face a marked change from a politicised populace leaning mainly towards Islam and the left to one turning towards the right of the political spectrum.



BOMB SCARE: The deserted Hashemiyeh Square in downtown Amman early Wednesday as security forces comb the area following an as-yet-unexplained report that a bomb was found in the area. Interior Minister Salameh Hamad later told the Lower House of Parliament that no bomb was found after a three-hour search (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Queen condoles Mrs. Assad

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday paid a visit to Syria to offer condolences to Mrs. Hafez Al Assad over the death of her son Basel Al Assad last month. Queen Noor was accompanied by their Royal Highnesses Princess Basma, Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein and Princess Ghida Talal as well as Mrs. Abdul Salam Al Majal and Mrs. Zeid Bin Shaker. The Queen was received by the wives of Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mohammad Zoubi and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharara.

Jordan, Germany sign accord

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Germany Wednesday signed in Bonn an agreement on extending the period for rescheduling DM 86 million (JD35 million) in Jordan's debts to Germany. The agreement was signed on the Jordanian side by Jordan's Ambassador in Bonn Samir Khalifah and on the German side by the director of the German foreign ministry's department on economic and commercial affairs. The German government has written off DM 29 million (JD 12 million) of Jordan's debts provided that the Kingdom spend half that sum on environmental projects.

Ramadan on Friday for Saudis

JEDDAH (AP) — Saudi Arabia announced Wednesday that Ramadan begins Friday. The announcement was made by the supreme judiciary council after ascertaining that no one had sighted the crescent by late Wednesday night.

Iraq food prices fall

BAGHDAD (R) — Food prices dropped in Baghdad markets following the government's decision to deregulate currency exchange, an official newspaper said Wednesday. Al Jumhuriyah said prices went down by between 10 and 20 per cent for basic foodstuffs since last week's decision to allow banks and licensed exchange houses to buy and sell hard currency at open market rates. People were taking advantage of the new rules, helping to boost the economy, it said. On Wednesday \$1 bought 210 Iraqi dinars at an official exchange house. Last week, prior to the government's decision, \$1 traded on the black market fetched more than 300 dinars. The dollar has stabilised on the still-thriving black market and is trading about 10 per cent higher than government-licensed exchanges. Until last week's move Iraq had maintained an exchange rate of 3.2 to one dinar. In its front-page article, Al Jumhuriyah said the price of sugar had dropped to 150 dinars per kg. Before the new arrangements the same quantity was selling for more than 200 dinars.

Chemical tanker, ferry collide

ISMAILIA, Egypt (R) — A passenger ferry and a chemical tanker collided in the Suez Canal in poor visibility on Wednesday morning, canal authorities said. They said all 2,001 people on board the Panamanian registered Al Salam 91 were safe and there was no leakage from the

Maltese-registered Corse, carrying a 3,000-tonne cargo. They said the collision occurred at dawn as thick fog reduced visibility. There was no disruption to canal traffic, they added. Both vessels were damaged and Al Salam 91 was taken to Suez Port for repairs.

Algeria to announce amnesty

RABAT (R) — Algeria will declare a general amnesty for political prisoners in the near future, the Saudi daily Al Sharq Al Awsat said on Wednesday, quoting Algerian Foreign Minister Salah Dombri. The paper printed by facsimile in Morocco quoted Mr. Dombri as saying in Brussels "a general amnesty for political prisoners will be issued soon." He gave no date. Mr. Dombri said that Algeria had dropped the security option in favour of dialogue with all parties without exception. In his first public statement since his appointment on Jan. 30, Algerian President Liamine Zeroual said on Monday there could be no solution to his country's two-year-old violent political crisis unless there was dialogue with all parties.

'Iraqi torch border island'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iraqi troops set an island ablaze near the Iranian border to dislodge rebels hiding out there, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said Tuesday. Reed fields were a mass of flame after troops moved in Sunday and Monday to oust rebels from the small island of Omol-Rassas, in the Shatt Al Arab waterway separating southern Iraq from Iran, the agency reported. Iranians living in the border area were alarmed when they heard explosions of bombs and ammunition left on the island following the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and the 1991 Gulf war, IRNA said. The Tehran-based Iraqi opposition has repeatedly accused the Iraqi army of attacking Shiite Muslim civilians living in Iraq's southern marshlands.

Mandela's Israel visit on hold

TEL AVIV (AP) — Nelson Mandela postponed a visit to the Jewish state until after Israel signs an agreement with the Palestinians to start withdrawing troops from occupied territories, the foreign ministry said Wednesday. Mr. Mandela, who heads the African National Congress (ANC), was to have visited Israel at the end of Feb., said Gadi Baltinsky, a foreign ministry spokesman.

Egyptian politician charged

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian authorities have charged opposition socialist Labour Party leader Ibrahim Shukri and the editor of the party newspaper with criminal libel. The public prosecutor had referred the charges to the criminal courts, which will fix the date for a trial, judicial sources said on Wednesday. The charges arise from articles in the party newspaper Al Shaab alleging that prime minister Atef Sedki, Zakaria Azmi, the head of President Hosni Mubarak's office and Cairo Governor Omar Abdul Kher protected a building contractor who was arrested last month and charged with corruption.

COLUMN

Italian prisoners ask thieves to return statue

ROME (R) — About 1,000 prisoners at a Rome jail have asked thieves who stole one of the city's most venerated objects, a 15th century "miracle" statue of the infant Jesus, to give it back. Father Vittorio Trani, chaplain at Rome's grim Regina Coeli (Queen of Heaven) Prison, said inmates were also praying hard for the safe return of the "Bambinello" (Baby Jesus). "They're convinced that their prayer, precisely because it comes from behind these walls, will be heard," Fr. Trani said. The small wooden statue, which is richly jewelled, was stolen a week ago from the Catholic Church of Santa Maria in Aracoele on Rome's Capitoline Hill. The theft shocked the Roman faithful, who believe the statue has miraculous healing powers. Tradition says that it was carved from an olive tree in the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem. About 1,000 of the 1,500 inmates at Regina Coeli have signed a petition demanding its return. "We are upset because this is a sacrilegious theft," the petition said. "We ask the thieves to give back the Bambino Gesù (Infant Jesus), which is dear to the hearts of so many Romans." At Christmas, Roman children recite poems in front of the statue. Letters from all over the world addressed to the Bambinello regularly arrive at the church, asking that sick children be healed.

Yeltsin has cold; working at home

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin has caught a slight cold and is working from his country house rather than his Kremlin offices, a spokesman said Wednesday. He said Mr. Yeltsin, 63, was preparing for a visit next week by British Prime Minister John Major and working on a keynote speech to the State Duma legislature scheduled for Feb. 18. "He is working normally," the spokesman said. Mr. Yeltsin, 63, has a large official residence near Moscow which he inherited from former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. His motorcade is a familiar morning sight for Muscovites, sweeping in from the country along a main radial road into the Kremlin. The spokesman said doctors believed Mr. Yeltsin had caught his cold during an official visit to Georgia last Thursday. Mr. Yeltsin's last major public appearance was at a news conference after signing a bilateral friendship treaty with Georgia. But the president has made few public pronouncements on policy in the new year, especially since a government reshuffle that has raised fears abroad and among radicals at home of a slackening in the pace of reform.

Japan princess denies rumours she's pregnant

TOKYO (AP) — Crown Princess Masako, who wed the heir to Japan's ancient chrysanthemum throne last summer, Wednesday denied rumours that she is expecting a baby, ending three weeks of frenzied speculation. The princess, making her first public appearance since the middle of last month, said that she has been resting because of a bad cold, not because she is expecting. "I'm getting better," she told reporters gathered at the palace for her first news conference since her wedding to Crown Prince Naruhito. "I'm sorry for all the worry I caused." "Frankly, we are quite surprised by all of the fuss created by her catching a cold," said her husband, who sat next to her. "I wonder if all the ruckus around us might not have angered the stork." Despite palace denials, the popular princess' sudden disappearance from the public eye led to immediate speculation in the tabloid press that a royal baby could be on the way. The palace, which is notoriously close-mouthed, had also initially told the press that Empress Michiko was sick with a cold when in fact she was pregnant with Prince Naruhito in 1959. Princess Masako, 30, the Harvard- and Oxford-educated daughter of one of Japan's top diplomats, wed Prince Naruhito, 33, last June 9 in a ceremony laden with ancient imperial pomp and costumes.

State Department nominee defends views on Israel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Strobe Talbott, President Bill Clinton's choice for the No. 2 post at the State Department, insisted in Senate hearing Tuesday that he was a staunch supporter of Israel but that he had "deviated" from that support in past writings critical of the Jewish state.

"I have always believed that the U.S.-Israel relation is unshakable," Mr. Talbott said in Senate Foreign Relations Committee confirmation hearings.

Mr. Talbott was grilled by both Democrats and Republicans on the committee about his writings as a Time magazine reporter before he joined the administration last year, particularly a 1981 article in which he suggested that American Jews had political influence far beyond their numbers and that Israel had become an "outright liability."

"I certainly don't feel the way I did 13 years ago on this," Mr. Talbott said on the issue of Israel's strategic importance. "I simply changed my opinion."

Several Jewish groups, including the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs and the National Jewish Coalition, have called on Mr. Clinton to withdraw Mr. Talbott's nomination to be deputy secretary of state because of his alleged anti-Israeli bias. Two Republican senators, Connie Mack of Florida and Alfonse D'Amato of New York, on Monday also came out against Mr. Talbott because of his "extreme views."

Sanaa frees plane

(Continued from page 1)

the plane's cargo was being transported with "with the knowledge of competent authorities and with a formal permission" and Yemeni air-force units had forced it to land in what he also called an act of air piracy.

"This was done without the knowledge of the command of the Ministry of Defence as the legal authority which has the right to issue such orders," he said.

The ministry's command "reserves the right to bring the

plane's hijackers to account and asks for the release of the plane and its cargo and that it be allowed to proceed to Aden.

But Mr. Saleh said on Yemeni radio on Tuesday that the cargo included spying equipment and asked how it had been paid for.

"In whose interest is this being done, where has the money come from and where is the sovereignty, the law and order which we have to protect?" he asked.

Sudanese planes bomb south; thousands flee

By Jonathan Clayton
Reuters

PAGERI, Sudan — "Quick, get out," shouted the driver. "There's an Antonov up there."

The battered jeep screeched to a halt on the dusty tracks. "Quick, into the bush, find some cover and tie low," the guide said.

Partially-hidden by the foliage of an old tree, two half-naked southern Sudanese men anxiously scanned the skies to try and sight the Khartoum government's bomber.

"There, there keep low," one suddenly said.

Against the light, blue sky of the African morning the bomber plane was clearly visible as it circled over the sprawling refugee camps and rebel-held villages of this impoverished area of south Sudan.

The throb of its engines ominously filled the still air as it

approached to drop its cargo of death.

"Down, down," shouted the Sudanese. A yonni child wailed in the distance.

The first bomb hit the earth with a thud. A pall of black, thick smoke curled upwards followed by a second, more muted explosion and the sound of exploding ammunition.

The Antonov banked and turned. The hum of the engines faded and then grew loud again.

The Sudanese and the group of visiting reporters braced themselves for a second approach.

Another explosion, another pall of smoke, then at least two more thuds further away in the direction of Aswi refugee camp.

The Antonov, its mission completed, headed off in the direction of the government-held southern capital of Juba.

'Schindler's List' gets 12 Oscar nominations

BEVERLY HILLS (AP) — "Schindler's List," Steven Spielberg's searing drama of death and salvation, captured a leading 12 nominations Wednesday for the 66th Academy Awards, including best picture and director.

Nominated for best foreign language film were Spain's "Belle Epoque," Hong Kong's "Farewell to My Concubine," the United Kingdom's Welsh-language "Ffled Wyn," Vietnam's "The Scent of Green Papaya" and Taiwan's "The Wedding Banquet."

It was the first time more than one film from Asia was nominated in the category in a single year.

"The Piano" and "The Remains of the Day" earned eight nominations each, including best picture. The other best picture nominees were "The Fugitive" and "In the Name of the Father."

Best actor nominees were Daniel Ray Lewis for "In the Name of the Father," Laurence Fishburne in "What's Love Got to Do With It," Tom Hanks in "Philadelphia," Anthony Hopkins in "The Remains of the Day" and Liam Neeson in "Schindler's List."

The actress nominations were Angela Bassett in "What's Love Got to Do With It," Stockard Channing in "Six Degrees of Separation," Holly Hunter in "The Piano," Emma Thompson in "The Remains of the Day" and Debra Winger in "Shadowlands."

Jane Campion became only the second woman to be nominated for the best director for "The Piano." Barbra Streisand was nominated for "The Prince of Tides" in 1992.

In addition to Mr. Spielberg, Mr. Campion faces Jim Sheridan for "In the Name of the Father," James Ivory for "The Remains of the Day," and Robert Altman for "Short Cuts."

Miss Thompson and Miss Hunter were each nominated for supporting actress, the first time in academy history two performers have received two nominations in the same year.

Miss Hunter was nominated in the supporting category for "The Firm" and Miss Thompson for "In the Name of the Father." Also nominated were Anna Paquin for "The Piano," Rosie Perez in "Fearless" and Winona Ryder in "The Age of Innocence."

Miss Paquin, at age 11, is the youngest performer to receive a nomination since Justin Henry, 8, was nominated in 1979 for "Ramer vs. Kramer."

Leonardo DiCaprio was nominated for best supporting actor for "What's Eating Gilbert Grape," joining Ralph Fiennes in "Schindler's List," Tommy Lee Jones in "The Fugitive," John Malkovich in "In the Line of Fire" and Pete Postlethwaite in "In the Name of the Father."

Mr. Spielberg, the most popular director in Hollywood history, received his fourth nomination for directing — but he has yet to win.

In 1986 he received an honorary Oscar but has been snubbed for such hits as E.T., The Extra Terrestrial and "Close Encounters of the Third Kind."

"Jurassic Park," the highest-grossing film in Hollywood history, earned just three nominations. Mr. Spielberg's Dinosaur blockbuster was nominated for sound, sound-effects editing and visual effects.

Among films with multiple nominations, "The Fugitive" earned seven, as did "In the Name of the Father." "The

Age of Innocence," collected five nominations, tying it with "Philadelphia."

The awards will be presented March 21 with actress Whoopi Goldberg as host.

Selected for original screenplay were "Dave," "In the Line of Fire," "Philadelphia," "The Piano" and "Sleepless in Seattle."

Adapted screenplay nominees were "The Age of Innocence," "In the Name of the Father," "The Remains of the Day," "Schindler's List" and "Shadowlands."

"The War Room," an inside look at strategist James Carville's work on the Clinton campaign, was nominated for best documentary feature.

Actor Peter Weller's "Partners" was among the five films nominated for best live action short.

Two songs from "Philadelphia" were nominated for best original song — Neil Young's "Philadelphia" and Bruce Springsteen's "Streets of Philadelphia."

"Schindler's List" had a head start on the best picture competition. It already won last month's Golden Globe for best dramatic motion picture.

Cairo deal

(Continued from page 1)

After the signing, Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres each shook hands with Mr. Mubarak and then each kissed him on both cheeks.

Mr. Rabin played a behind-the-scenes role. In Israel his spokesman, Gad Ben-Ari, said Mr. Rabin late Wednesday received material from the Cairo negotiations and reviewed it with his military and intelligence advisers.

The ceremony took place at Mr. Mubarak's ornate Al Ittihadia Palace.

The negotiations since Monday have included at least seven sessions between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres. Neither has given details on the talks.

The problem areas have been control of the crossings from the autonomous Palestinian areas to Egypt and Jordan, security for Jewish settlers who remain in Gaza and the size of the Jericho area to be ceded by Israel.

Uri Savir, the chief Israeli delegate, described the negotiations as a process of working "sentence by sentence, word by word."

"For each word we have an hour of argument," he said.